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PRUSSIA.

It is very difficult to take an interest in Prussian affairs, but we fancy that our attention will be forcibly attracted to them before long. A Parliamentary crisis, of course, is at hand. But the crisis that is coming now, will, it is thought, be worse than the preceding ones; and the fact that a *crisis* is always occurring, is in itself a very dangerous symptom. The Prussian constitution has for some time past been subject to fits, and we should not be much surprised if the one that is now expected should try it very severely, and perhaps carry it off.

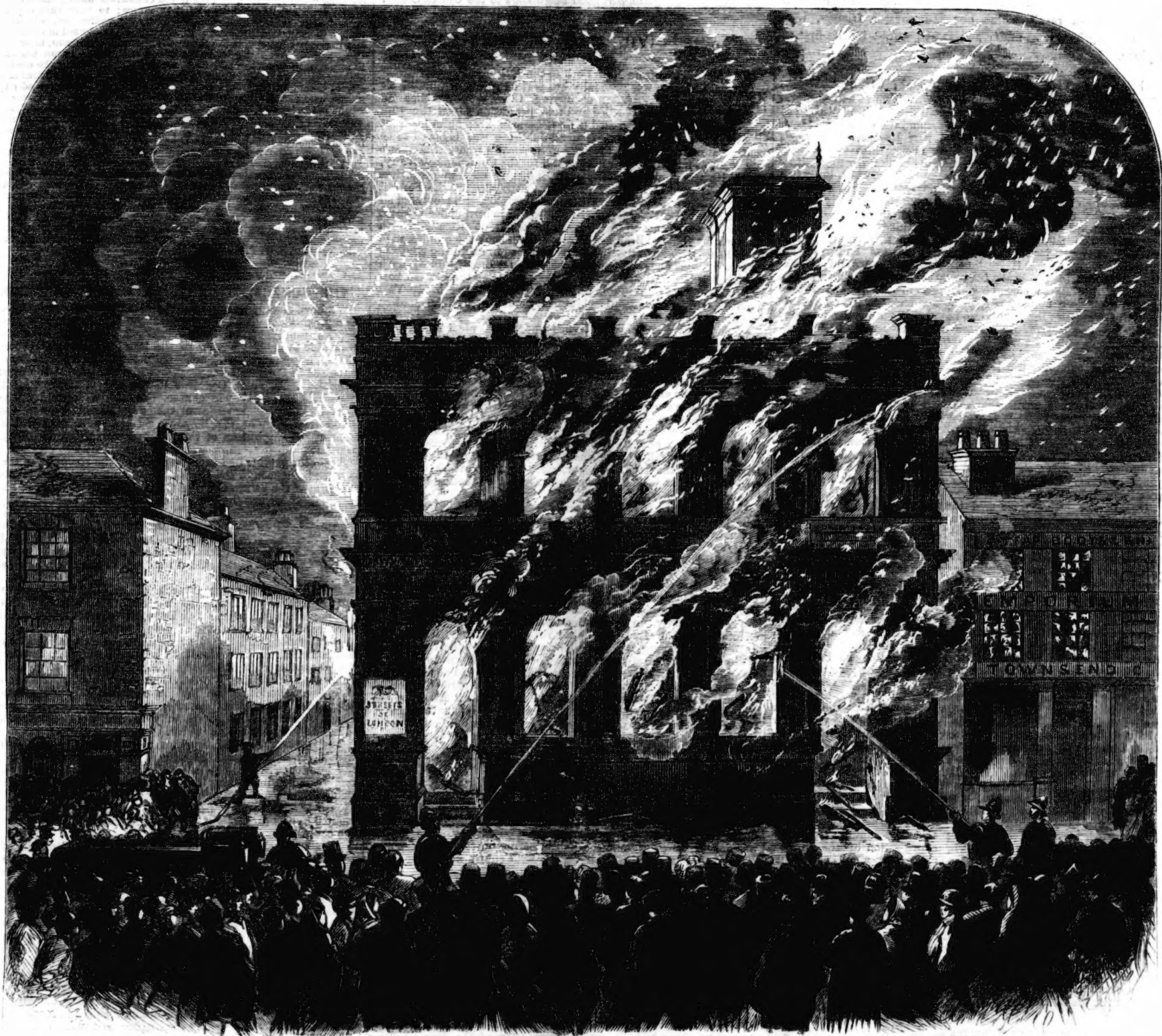
The Prussian people wish for domestic reforms and for a reduction of taxes, while the Prussian Ministry, or what in Prussia comes to the same thing, the Prussian Crown, is, above all, bent on maintaining a large and efficient military force. The Prussian Chamber has a right to vote the Budget, but the Crown denies its right to deliberate on the organization of the army—to say what number of troops are

to be kept under arms, to limit the period of service, and so on. Deny it the privilege of discussing these matters, however, and the Chamber will refuse to vote the Budget; and people in Berlin are already asking how, when that has happened, the taxes will be raised? If they are levied by force, the Constitution will have been violated, whether or not it be formally abolished by a *coup-d'état*. In this foolish but dangerous quarrel it is satisfactory to think that both sides are in the wrong. The Prussian Ministers wish to behave illegally, but the Prussian people behaved immorally when they encouraged and urged the Government to invade Denmark, a step which really compels Prussia to keep up a large army, unless all profit from the invasion is to be lost.

M. Bismarck, when he is not occupied with the affairs of the Chamber, is said to be engaged in rousing up documents for the purpose of proving that the house of Brandenburg is entitled by descent to rule in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. He will, no doubt, succeed in making out his case,

just as, in the last century, the three Powers who partitioned Poland all contrived to prove that they only took what legally belonged to them. M. Bismarck goes back to the Emperor Maximilian I., who is accused of having conferred the duchies in reversion on the house of Brandenburg. The Emperor Charles V. is also appealed to. M. Bismarck's doctrine, fully and plainly stated, amounts to this—that every Power which has at any time had claims, actual or prospective, on a given territory, has a right to seize that territory. Whatever Maximilian I. promised to the house of Brandenburg about the duchies, we know that the King of Denmark was the lawful ruler of both Holstein and Schleswig a year and a half ago, and that Prussia never pretended to have any right to replace him until, by a mixture of force and frauds, she had gained possession of the country.

The Schleswig-Holstein affair does not seem to be nearly finished yet. There has already been a great deal of quarrelling about the spoil between Prussia and Austria, and it is



FIRE AT THE SURREY THEATRE, SHEFFIELD.

expected that, as soon as Prussia openly avows her annexation project, Russia and France will have some little objections to make. France could, of course, be silenced by the cession of a slice of territory on the Rhine, and for that very reason France is sure to make a great outcry. It is generally held, we believe, in England that it matters very little to us whether Prussia extends her frontier or not, and that, on the whole, it is rather to our advantage that Prussia should be strong. Prussia is a Protestant country, it is true, and the Prussians fought side by side with the English at the Battle of Waterloo. These are the facts on which the theory that England and Prussia are natural allies seems to be based; but, if we go a little further back than 1815, we find Prussia fighting on the French side; and if we look at the brief history of the country as a whole, we cannot discover any principle at the bottom of the alliances of all kinds that Prussia has formed, but simply a passion to acquire territory, no matter by what means or by whose aid. Take from Prussia what Prussia has taken from Austria, from Poland, from Saxony, and from France, and very little indeed would remain. When the annexation of Schleswig and Holstein is effected Prussia will not have one neighbour that she will not have robbed, except, indeed, Hanover—on which, however, M. Bismarck is said already to have his eye—and Russia, which has already an eye on M. Bismarck.

It appears to us a great mistake to suppose that Prussia can go on annexing territory without affecting the interests of England. There is a regular partitioning principle in Europe which, for some time to come, is much more likely to be acted upon than the much-talked-of "principle of nationalities." France seized Nice and Savoy because she could not allow a strong Italian State to be formed without securing her own frontiers on the side of Italy. If Prussia should, by annexing the duchies, acquire a considerable addition of territory and an important seaport, France will feel called upon to rectify her boundary on the Rhine; and if all northern Germany should become Prussian, it would be easy to show that, for the maintenance of a proper political equilibrium, Antwerp ought to be French. The French might, of course, remain at Antwerp without thinking of coming over to England; but we should have two Cherbours threatening us instead of one, and should be obliged to increase our naval expenditure—a result which our Manchester friends, who hate nothing in war so much as its cost, would be the first to deplore.

FIRE AT THE SURREY THEATRE, SHEFFIELD.

THE Surrey Theatre at Sheffield was burnt down at half-past two o'clock on Saturday morning last. A small fire had been discovered in Burgess street half an hour previously, and the engines had been called out. The firemen of the Royal Fire Insurance Company's brigade were in the act of backing their engine into the station, when a bright light was observed in the direction of Westbar. How long the theatre had been burning it is impossible to say, but when discovered the flames were blazing through the roof, illuminating all the neighbourhood. The Royal engines were quickly on the spot, but the flames had obtained such a hold of the building that it was quite impossible to do anything to arrest their progress. The flames were spreading with such rapidity that the officers were justified in fearing that the entire square formed by Westbar, Hick's-lane, Spring-street, and Workhouse-lane was in the most imminent danger. Numbers of the women and children occupying houses in Hick's-lane rushed out terror-stricken, not daring to delay a moment to put on a single article of dress. In the thickly-crowded houses in the yards behind Hick's-lane many were so paralysed with terror as to be helpless, and had to be dragged out of their houses by the officers to whom was intrusted the duty of seeing that no lives were sacrificed. The condition of the poor people was pitiable, as they ran barefoot along the streets in search of shelter. The fire brigade therefore directed their engines to throw water on the adjoining property, to prevent the flames spreading beyond the walls of the theatre, and in this they succeeded. Within the walls of the theatre the fire continued to burn furiously. One after another the galleries fell, with a great crash, checking the flames for a moment only to throw them up again with greater fierceness. The walls were lofty and unusually strong, and afforded a protection to the surrounding property which double the number of engines would have been utterly inadequate to afford.

One of the pieces performed the preceding night was "The Streets of London," in which occurs a mock (it may almost be said a real) fire scene, and in Sheffield great pains had been taken to render the incident with startling effect. To give éclat to the great scene a fire-engine from the Liverpool and London fire office, with an adequate force of men, were nightly engaged in taking part in the play. Their business was confined to the fire scene, and, from all accounts, they required no rehearsal. Abundance of water was stored in the hall, and every precaution taken against the mimic scene becoming by mischance a reality. It is not known, however, whether the real conflagration of Saturday morning had any connection with the artistic one of the play; and, so complete is the destruction of the premises, that it is probable no light will ever be thrown upon the cause of the disaster. The theatre and its contents had cost from £25,000 to £30,000. They were insured for £12,000 with the Liverpool and London Company, and that office had divided the risk with four others, among which are the Phoenix and the Law and Commercial. It is highly satisfactory to know that the surrounding property has escaped with the slightest possible damage; that no lives have been lost; nor, so far as we have heard, has injury to any one been sustained.

The building, of which Mr. Youdan was the sole proprietor, was erected in 1851, at which time it was used for the purposes of singing and dancing. A museum and a picture-gallery were afterwards added; and subsequently, in 1855, the establishment was enlarged to the proportions of a first-class theatre. It has frequently, since that period, been further enlarged; and last summer it was re-opened with great éclat, the entire construction of the interior eliciting the encomiums of the thousands who entered its walls. It was in the Surrey Theatre that Mr. Roebuck met his constituents after his visit to Austria, when he was taunted with being "fêted in gilded saloons," and to which the hon. member retorted, while admiring the beauty of the edifice, with the remark, "Am I not in a gilded saloon now?" It may be mentioned also, in passing, that the splendid museum contained, amongst its thousands of treasures, a marble bust of the hon. member, which the town failed to purchase by subscription; and it was in this theatre, too, that the Social Science Association expected to hold their principal meeting this year, the proprietor having generously offered the use of his property for the occasion.

GABRIEL'S DAUGHTER TERESITA has just given birth, at Ceyra, to a boy, who, by his grandfather's desire, has been christened Lincoln, in honour of the "American President, who has abolished slavery."

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

The Marquis de Lavalette has been appointed Minister of the Interior in the place of M. Boudet, who has resigned. M. Boudet has been translated to the dignified and well-paid ease of the Senate.

Some of the Paris papers talk of a serious misunderstanding existing between the Porte and the French Ambassador, in consequence of which the latter has left Constantinople for Paris to confer with his Government.

M. Rogeard, who wrote a pamphlet satirising Napoleon III. and his system in the shape of a satire upon the "Histoire de Jules César," has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Luckily for M. Rogeard, however, he had taken the precaution, immediately after publishing his clever and bitter pamphlet, to put the Belgian frontier between himself and the Imperial author whom he satirised. His publisher, who is believed to have offended unwittingly, gets off with a month's imprisonment and a fine of 500f.

ITALY.

Some of the Italian papers publish a letter bearing Mazzini's signature, which affirms that there exists a secret protocol to the Franco-Italian Convention providing for the cession to France of a part of Piedmont if Italy should obtain Rome or Venice. Mazzini (if the letter be really his) insists that this story is true. General Della Marmora, the Italian Prime Minister, and Visconti Venosta, the late Foreign Minister, have, in the most solemn manner, assured the Chamber of Deputies that the story has not the slightest foundation.

GERMANY AND THE DUCHIES.

An extraordinary sitting of the German Diet was held at Frankfurt on Monday. Bavaria and Saxony brought forward a motion calling on the Governments of Austria and Prussia to cede the duchy of Holstein to the hereditary Prince of Augustenburg, and to communicate to the Diet the arrangements they have made in reference to the duchy of Lauenburg. It was proposed that this motion should be taken into consideration on the 6th of April next, and the discussion was fixed accordingly by a majority of nine against six votes.

RUSSIA.

The Russian Government has thought it prudent to address a circular to its representatives at foreign Courts for the purpose of explaining the object of the Russian acquisitions of territory in Central Asia. The circular, penned by Prince Gortschakoff, insists that these acquisitions are necessary for the security of Russia, and that she seeks nothing in the shape of mere territorial aggrandisement.

CANADA.

The Canadian Government has proposed a vote of 1,000,000 dols. for the permanent defence of the country, and 350,000 dols. for the expenses of the volunteers on the frontier.

The Finance Minister announces that the Government must maintain the police and militia on the frontier so long as the war lasts, and fulfil their obligations as good neighbours to the United States.

THE CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA.

WAR NEWS.

We have advices from New York to the 19th ult.

General Sherman was gradually but pertinaciously continuing his forward movement. After occupying Cheraw he marched on Fayetteville, which he reached and took possession of on the 12th ult. General Hardee retreated before Sherman, keeping in his front at a moderate distance, while General Johnston was believed to be concentrating his forces still further in Sherman's front. Sherman's advance was not altogether unopposed, for the Confederate cavalry, under Hampton, attacked Kilpatrick, inflicting on him great loss and taking several hundred prisoners. According to the Federal account, Kilpatrick in his turn attacked Hampton, and recovered all he had lost. The Federals operating from Newbern under General Schofield, were encountered on their march on Kinston, North Carolina, by General Bragg, who drove them back three miles, with great loss. Subsequently, Schofield succeeded in capturing Kinston, after a vigorous and prolonged attack, General Bragg retiring upon Goldsborough. Sherman has completely desolated the eastern portion of Southern Carolina, burning everything before him. Vast quantities of ammunition and artillery have been discovered at Charleston.

Baton Rouge despatches of the 9th report the Confederate General Forrest at Macon, Georgia, with 15,000 cavalry, to which he was daily receiving additions.

The Federal fleet had assembled in great strength in the Lower Bay, at Mobile, and an immediate attack was anticipated.

The Potomac army was under arms on the 14th and 15th, in consequence of the movement of large bodies of troops and other active operations observable within Lee's lines. Reports were current in the army that several principal Federal works had been mined by the Confederates, and it was conjectured that their movements were preparatory to a sally, to be immediately followed by an explosion. Despatches of the 16th, however, state that no attack had been made by Lee, and that all was again quiet on both sides of the hostile lines.

General Grant had issued an order making void all Treasury permits for commerce with the Confederate Atlantic States, except that portion of Virginia under his immediate supervision.

In the Shenandoah, General Sheridan, according to his own report, appears to have had everything his own way. After the defeat of General Early he pushed across the Blue Ridge and entered Charlottesville. He then pushed on to Lynchburg, destroying everything in his way, but found the latter place too strong to attack. Another body of troops he sent due south from Charlotte to Columbia, on the James River, to destroy property. This was done most effectually. The Canawaba Canal runs on the north side of the James to Lynchburg, and has been used largely for the conveyance of stores for Lee's army to Richmond. This canal was destroyed in several places and rendered useless. The troops found an abundance of provisions in the country. Sheridan further reports his arrival at Fredericksburg Railway, crossing the South Anna River on the 15th. He contrived to damage the James River Canal to Goochland, whence he turned northward and destroyed the bridges on both the Annas. At Virginia Central Railway Bridge the Confederates attempted resistance, but were driven off, losing three cannon.

GENERAL NEWS.

President Davis had submitted a message to Congress impressing upon that body the critical nature of military affairs and the necessity for united, prompt, and vigorous action in all departments of the public service, which he declared to be alone necessary to overcome the dangers which threaten the Confederacy. He recommended the suspension of the habeas corpus on the plea of public safety and imperative necessity. Vigorous efforts were being made to organise coloured troops.

Mr. Lincoln, under date of the 14th ult., orders the arrest and imprisonment during the war of all Federal citizens or domiciled aliens who have held intercourse with the Confederate States by sea; he also directs all non-resident foreigners who have been engaged in blockade-running to leave the country within twelve days if on the Atlantic side, and within forty days if on the Pacific side, not to return during the war, under pain of imprisonment.

The Paris mission had been offered to Mr. James Gordon Bennett, of the *New York Herald*, who, however, declined the appointment, which had been conferred upon Mr. John Bigelow, Acting Chargé d'Affaires in the French capital.

The breaking up of the ice on the Susquehanna and other rivers by sudden thaw had caused the inundation of the districts along their courses, and millions of dollars worth of property was esti-

mated to have been destroyed. The Petroleum districts in Pennsylvania had been the greatest sufferers, and the Oil City had been wholly submerged.

RETALIATION IN WAR.

The following correspondence, which is said to have passed between Generals Sherman and Wade Hampton, has been published in the *New York journals* :—

Head-quarters Military Division of the Mississippi, in the Field, Feb. 24, 1865.

General.—It is officially reported to me that our foraging parties are murdered, after capture, and labelled "Death to all foreigners!" One instance of a lieutenant and seven men, near Chesterfield, and another of twenty, "near a ravine, eighty rods from the main road," about three miles from Feasterville. I have ordered a similar number of prisoners in my hands to be disposed of in like manner. I hold about 1000 prisoners, captured in various ways, and can stand it as long as you; but I hardly think these murders are committed with your knowledge; and would suggest that you give notice to the people at large that every life taken by them simply results in the death of one of your Confederates. Of course, you cannot question my right to forage on the country. It is a war right as old as history. The manner of exercising it varies with circumstances, and if the civil authorities will supply my requisitions, I will forbear all foraging. But I find no civil authorities who can respond to calls for forage or provisions, and therefore must collect directly of the people. I have no doubt this is the occasion of much misbehaviour on the part of our men; but I cannot permit an enemy to judge or punish with wholesale murder. Personally, I regret the bitter feelings engendered by this war; but they were to be expected, and I simply allege that those who struck the first blow and made war inevitable ought not in fairness to reproach us for the natural consequences. I merely assert our war right to forage, and my resolve to protect my foragers to the extent of life for life.

W. T. SHERMAN, Major-General U.S.A.

Lieut.-General Wade Hampton, Commanding Cavalry Forces C.S.A.

Head-quarters, in the Field, Feb. 27, 1865.

General.—Your communication of the 24th inst. reached me to-day. In it you state that it has been officially reported that your foraging parties were "murdered" after capture, and you go on to say that you had "ordered a similar number of prisoners in your hands to be disposed of in like manner." That is to say, you have ordered a number of Confederate soldiers to be "murdered." You characterise your order in proper terms, for the public voice, even in your own country, where it seldom dares express itself in vindication of truth, honour, or justice, will surely agree with you in pronouncing you guilty of murder if your order is carried out. Before dismissing this portion of your letter, I beg to assure you for every soldier of mine "murdered" by you I shall have executed at once two of yours, giving, in all cases, preference to any officers who may be in my hands.

In reference to the statement you make regarding the death of your foragers, I have only to say that I know nothing of it; that no orders given by me authorise the killing of prisoners after capture, and that I do not believe that my men killed any of yours, except under circumstances in which it was perfectly legitimate and proper that they should kill them. It is a part of the system of the thieves whom you designate as your foragers to fire the dwellings of those citizens whom they have robbed. To check this inhuman system, which is justly execrated by every civilised nation, I have directed my men to shoot down all of your men who are caught burning houses. This order shall remain in force as long as you disgrace the profession of arms by allowing your men to destroy private dwellings. You say that I cannot, of course, question your right to forage on the country. "It is a right as old as history." I do not, Sir, question this right. But there is a right older even than this, and one more inalienable—the right that every man has to defend his home and to protect those who are dependent upon him; and from my heart I wish that every old man and boy in my country who can fire a gun would shoot down, as he would a wild beast, the men who are desolating their land, burning their houses, and insulting their women. You are particular in defining and claiming "war rights," may I ask if you enumerate among them the right to fire upon a defenceless city without notice; to burn that city to the ground after it had been surrendered by the authorities, who claimed, though in vain, that protection which is always accorded in civilised warfare to non-combatants, to fire the dwelling-houses of citizens, after robbing them, and to perpetrate even darker crimes than these—crimes too black to be mentioned? You have permitted, if you have not ordered, the commission of these offences against humanity and the rules of war. You fired into the city of Columbia without a word of warning. After its surrender by the Mayor, who demanded protection to private property, you laid the whole city in ashes, leaving amidst its ruins thousands of old men and helpless women and children, who are likely to perish of starvation and exposure. Your line of march can be traced by the lurid light of burning houses, and in more than one household there is an agony far more bitter than that of death. The Indian scalped his victim, regardless of sex or age; but with all his barbarities he always respected the persons of his female captives. Your soldiers, more savage than the Indian, insult those whose natural protectors are absent. In conclusion, I have only to request that whenever you have any of my men "disposed of" or "murdered," for the terms appear to be synonymous with you, you will let me hear of it, in order that I may know what action to take in the matter. In the mean time, I shall hold fifty-six of your men as hostages for those whom you have ordered to be executed.—I am yours, &c., WADE HAMPTON, Lieutenant-General.

Major-General W. T. Sherman, U.S. Army.

THE FUNERAL OF THE LATE DUC DE MORNAY.

WE have already published a short memoir of the late Duc de Mornay, whose death has had so great an influence not only on the Imperial family, but on the whole Court of France. We are this week able to publish a view of the late Peer's funeral procession, which, in some respects, was the most imposing that has been witnessed in Paris for some years. From the time of the departure from the Place de la Concorde to the arrival at Père la Chaise, the whole ceremony was characterised by a solemnity which is only sometimes observable in the gay French capital, and the well-known grief of the Emperor seemed to be respected in the manner and disposition of the numbers who witnessed the funeral pageant.

A *chapelle ardente* had been prepared for the reception of the body in the large saloon of the Legislative Chamber, which is reached by the steps of the palace opposite the Pont de la Concorde; and the entire front of the building was hung with black drapery, the pillars bearing the words "Pro Patria et Imperatore." Troops lined the space between the palace and the Quay d'Orsay, and the Pont de la Concorde was also lined with soldiers, while salutes, which began to be fired at seven o'clock in the morning, were repeated every hour until the cortège left the official residence of the late Duke, itself an annex of the Chamber.

The space around the Church of St. Clotilde is so small, and the adjacent streets so narrow, that, although this was the parish church of the late Duke, it was thought inadvisable to bring so large a concourse of people into such a limited area, and it was therefore determined to conduct the funeral service at the Madeleine, where there would be a large open space, and to which the procession could advance in a straight line by the Place de la Concorde and the Rue Royale. The distinguished guests and the high functionaries invited for the occasion were ordered to be in attendance, in suitable costume, at the Legislative Chamber, at eleven o'clock; and those specially invited were requested to take their allotted seats before twelve.

The front of the Madeleine was veiled in black drapery, fringed with silver, and ornamented with shields, surmounted by coronets; the interior was hung in a similar manner, and had a profoundly sombre effect, in striking contrast with the lofty bier, which was richly decorated and illuminated with rows of tapers rising above each other, the yellow flame from which was strangely supplemented by the green light from the lamps occupying the centre of the choir.

At about half-past twelve the procession reached the church, the remains being received by the Abbé Dugny, curé of the parish, who celebrated the musical mass; the absolution at the close of the solemn service being pronounced by the Archbishop of Paris, who had attended M. de Mornay in his last moments. Even the great building of the Madeleine was crowded to excess, and many of those who had received invitations were compelled to remain outside, where an immense concourse of people had assembled on the quays on both sides of the river from which the Legislative Chamber is visible, in the Place de la Concorde, on the terraces of the Tuilleries Gardens, at the entrance to the avenue of the Champs Elysées, in the Rue Royale, and the approaches to the Boulevard of the Madeleine. Along the old boulevards, too, the well-known positions were taken up by the people who knew that the route to Père la Chaise would be followed by the cortège, and many of the windows and balconies were filled with spectators. Between the Rue de la Faix and the Madeleine the way was kept clear and order maintained

by a detachment of mounted Gardes de Paris and companies of Sergens de Ville.

At half-past one o'clock the procession left the Madeleine. It was headed by a squadron of the Gardes de Paris, followed by one of mounted Chasseurs with their full band. Then came a regiment of foot Chasseurs, also accompanied with their band; and this was followed by general officers of the brigades of the army of Paris; another battalion of foot Chasseurs; two regiments of the Line, with their band; the Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, and the Voltigeurs of the same corps. Marshal Magnan, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Paris, appeared at the head of the troops, in full uniform and mounted on a splendid charger covered with rich housings. He was attended by a numerous and brilliant Staff.

The hearse, which was immediately preceded by two carriages containing priests, was gorgeously decorated. The six black horses by which it was drawn were covered with trappings of black and silver, and bore lofty sable plumes. The hearse itself was surmounted by a ducal coronet veiled with black crape, and the coffin was concealed by a pall of silver cloth, the fringes of which nearly swept the ground. Attendants followed, bearing on a cushion the insignia and decorations of the deceased Duke. The officials of the Legislative Chamber, the presidency, and other departments also walked in the procession. Then followed two of the Emperor's state carriages, one belonging to Prince Napoleon, several mourning carriages, and a considerable number containing senators, Councillors of State, deputies, magistrates in their red or black robes, diplomatic functionaries, and officers of the army.

The long line of vehicles was followed by a battalion of the Imperial Guard, two batteries of Artillery, a squadron of mounted Chasseurs, and a battalion of the Gardes de Paris; and the procession closed with a strong detachment of Sergens de Ville.

The chief mourners were Count Flahault, M. de Lavalette, the Prefect of Police, and M. Marpont, an intimate friend of the deceased. The pallbearers were MM. Rouher, Minister of State; Schneider, Vice-President of the Legislative Chamber; Delangle, Vice-President of the Senate; and De Persigny, as President of the Council. The Emperor was represented by the Duke of Bassano (Chamberlain) and General Fleury, the Empress by M. Cosé Brissac, and Prince Napoleon by one of his aides-de-camp.

At a little after three o'clock the cortege reached the cemetery of Père la Chaise, where the coffin was laid in the vault, and earnest and impressive speeches were delivered over the grave by M. Schneider and M. Rouher, both of whom testified to the public and private virtues of their departed friend.

THE SKATING-HALL AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

UNLESS a prophecy current just now is yet to be fulfilled, and the first days of what should be the springtide are inaugurated by the sudden freezing of the Thames, professors of the noble art of skating and adepts in the mysteries of the outer edge will have no opportunity at present for the display of their accomplishments on any piece of metropolitan water.

Throughout the winter, the severity of which has been more trying than usual, the weather has been so fitful that even the most ardent advocates of this exercise have been compelled to relinquish any regular sport, and the London skating clubs have been nowhere. Adventurous spirits, it is true, have endeavoured to sustain their enthusiasm on the weak, sloppy ice in the parks, and the Royal Humane Society's men have had a hard time of it; but there has been no good, smooth run of ice, such as may generally be secured at least once during the season. Artificial ice has long since been pronounced a failure, and, unless some enterprising capitalist had ventured to lay down blocks of vanilla, surrounded with banks of sponge-cake and snow-trifle, not even the ladies, who are amongst the most earnest and determined skaters when they have once conquered their first timidity, would have become subscribers to a pastime which is more dangerous under such circumstances than when it is conducted on its legitimate element. These being the conditions of our present climate, and the bunches of rusting skates hanging at the ironmongers' doors having been relegated to the back shops until next December, it remained for some inventive or adaptive genius to produce a novelty in the way of locomotion; and the public, who have somehow learned to look to the Crystal Palace for an initiative in matters of amusement, have scarcely been surprised at the opening of a "New Skating-Hall," which, as an adjunct to the gymnasium and the archery-ground, may, for anything we can see, hold its own through the summer.

Utterly discarding the notion of bad imitations of ice, the director of this new saloon has cleverly adopted an experiment which had been previously tried with only partial success; and, although he does not profess to provide a complete substitute for a "clear run" and a "light iron," has contrived to give us a new amusement, of which a large and appreciative company avail themselves almost daily.

The new hall is an immense and lofty saloon at the end of the machinery annexe, and beneath the tropical courts of the palace, its furniture consisting of a bench running nearly round the wall, and a floor—a floor as evenly laid as the deck of a man-of-war. The skates are of the ordinary shape, with brass frames and straps to fasten them to the feet, but, in place of an iron, they are provided with three exactly-fitting wheels of vulcanised indiarubber, perfectly free in their revolutions and completely noiseless as they run over the wood.

As these wheels are about twice the width of any ordinary skating iron, and the surface on which they move is less slippery than ice, the danger of an awkward tumble is considerably diminished; and a "back header" is a thing of very rare occurrence, and even an occasional "downer" is not attended with any serious injury.

Saturday is the great day for the spectator who desires to see how gracefully this saloon-skating ministers to healthy exercise and locomotive skill; for on Saturdays the ladies (some of whom take lessons of regular instructresses) are in full force, and the gay tints of their dresses, the rustle of silk, and the sparkle of bright eyes, as they flash hither and thither, is one of the pleasantest scenes in that pleasantest of all winter retreats.

There is fun, too, for those who choose to sit and look on—the same gentlemen with that uncertainty about their legs which reminds one of Cousin Feenix; the same portly individuals who can neither stand still nor go on until they are cushioned into a corner; the same nervous youths who balance themselves by means of a walking-cane and bow profoundly whenever they feel their feet moving involuntarily; the same bold and reckless aspirants who lumber hither and thither, to the terror of vacuous swells whose feet will either suddenly diverge or as suddenly trip each other up. There are a goodly number of graceful, "swanlike" creatures, however, who have become quite accomplished skaters here, even though they may never have ventured on the ice; and not a few who are good for all sorts of evolutions which show that they are at home on either element.

There can be no doubt that skill in this skating game is very easily acquired; and when we remember that it enables the most timorous to take delightful exercise when walking in the muddy streets of our much-undermined city is an abominable infliction, its increasing popularity can scarcely be doubted.

Even those favoured individuals who possess unexceptionable ankles and well-knit legs will find an hour in the skating-saloon a capital refresher; and we can suggest no greater pleasure during the continuance of the cold weather than a series of such constitutional gambadoes, to be followed by a stroll through that wonderful collection from the Summer Palace of Pekin, of which we wrote last week. If, after gazing at the carved jade-stones, the five-clawed dragon robes, the mantles of blue foxes' throats, the vases, the barbaric gems, the great uncut jewels, and all the rare findings of that historical "loot," the accomplished skater can secure a copy of Captain Negroni's book and read it under the shadow of the tropical palm, and the blossoming camellias, he will enjoy an hour of such delightful rest as will compensate for all the "ennuis" of a dull wintry day.

SCENES OF AUSTRALIAN LIFE AND CHARACTER.

A LAND SALE.

THE city of Melbourne, the metropolis of Victoria, is built on the banks of the Yarra-Yarra, and the fact that the city stands on two hills makes the east and western portions discernible at a glance. The streets are now well macadamised, and have footpaths which, in the larger ones, are 12 ft. in width. The town is brilliantly lighted with gas, which was first introduced in 1856. There is an abundant supply of water, which is obtained from the river, and also from the Yan Yean water-works. In 1846 Prince's Bridge was built across the Yarra-Yarra, at an expense of £15,000; but so little idea had the inhabitants of the vast city which would spring from a place then but little larger than a small English market-town, that the bridge was erected so narrow as to render it now almost useless for the enormous amount of traffic continually passing to and fro from light till dark, in an almost uninterrupted stream. To relieve it, a large wooden bridge has been built across the river near the falls, which divide the fresh from the salt water.

To a new arrival, Melbourne must appear to have been built, as it really was, by fits and starts, from the peculiarity of its architectural design; for by the side of a large, handsome, imposing building will perhaps stand a wooden structure of a most unprepossessing and primitive appearance, with no greater pretensions to elegance than a second-rate coach shed, and a remarkable similarity of architecture displayed in its erection. We must take into consideration the fact that these inferior buildings were built between the years 1851 and 1856, when the price of labour, land, and material was something fabulous. Carpenters, when disengaged, were eagerly sought after at 25s. per day; while bricklayers, stonemasons, &c., commanded equally high wages. Four thousand buildings were erected in one year, and it is only reasonable to suppose that when houses were run up in such a manner little or no attention was paid to similarity or beauty of design. Yet year by year the character and style of the buildings are improving, because houses and places of business large enough to make shift with in the earlier and more unsettled days are found inadequate for the purposes of the present day, especially now that a regard for appearances is acquiring that standing and influence which it seldom fails to do in all civilised communities.

Melbourne possesses many stately public buildings—viz., the Treasury, public library, benevolent asylum, Houses of Assembly, Custom House, and the General Post Office. Besides the public buildings, many of the streets are ornamented by the princely edifices belonging to the banks, which exceed in beauty and general appearance many of those in large European cities. There is also the University, two large hospitals, two orphan and lunatic asylums, besides several other institutions devoted to charitable purposes. Ecclesiastical edifices are not lacking, all religious denominations being well represented; but St. Francis Cathedral, belonging to the Roman Catholic community, is the finest building used for devotional purposes in the colony. There are the Theatres Royal, Haymarket, and Princess's, besides several other smaller places of entertainment. In literary matters, there are three daily papers, besides a similar number of weekly ones; and, of course, that facetious individual Mr. Punch has his representative, who also makes a weekly appearance.

The railway communication is only in its infancy. Five short lines run to some of the suburbs, Geelong, &c., and one main trunk line, designed eventually to connect Melbourne with Sydney, a distance of about 700 miles, nearly 150 of which is completed on the Victorian side. Communication is kept up with the various towns and diggings lying more inland by means of coaches drawn by from four to six horses, on the American system, and about Melbourne by prettily designed cars, one of which attracted favourable notice at the last Exhibition.

The first Land Sale was held by Mr. Surveyor Hoddle, on June 1, 1837, only twenty-seven years ago, when he sold 100 half-acre allotments, which fetched £35 each. A Mr. Faulkner bought one of the principal corners for £10, being the space now occupied by the Shakespeare Hotel, situated at the corner of Collins and Market streets, the same allotment being now worth £5000. This extraordinary rise is still more remarkable when we take into consideration the few years that have elapsed since it was originally purchased. Another half acre, opposite the General Post Office, fetched £28, and it is extremely doubtful if it could now be purchased at any price.

In 1851 gold was discovered: then began the real days of Australian prosperity, and then poured into Melbourne a complete flood of emigration, for which it was totally unprepared. Lodgings could scarcely be obtained at any price; people were landed on the beach in thousands, and could not find shelter anywhere. Miserable wooden tenements, formerly let at 5s., were eagerly taken at £3 to £5 per week, payable in advance. Land instantly rose in proportion; owners asked the most absurd prices; a hundred pounds per foot was reasonable; nearly every one was either land or building mad. Speculators of doubtful reputation bought sundry uninhabitable swamps, which they fantastically laid out, on elaborately-designed charts, and described as eligible building allotments near Melbourne, with a first-class supply of water, which was really the most truthful part, for a friend of the writer was foolish enough to purchase a lot described as an advantageous opportunity to any person fond of bathing and fishing; and, sure enough, on his going to inspect his bargain, which fancy had painted as a sloping lawn with a clear fishpond at the bottom, he found to his disgust that, if he wished to pass over his ground, he must do so in a boat, for it was an interminable swamp, full of frogs. The glass fronts were removed from shops, and, with a full open view, these land sales were advertised and champagne luncheons given free as an inducement to get people inside, leaving then the exciting influences of spirits, champagne, &c., to elate those present into becoming profitable customers to the auctioneer, which they very often did by paying a deposit on an allotment and afterwards getting so inebriated as to forget all about their purchase and deposit too. Land is even now sold something after the same style, but the business is not characterised with that rowdiness and recklessness of former years. As a proof of the careless spirit pervading all classes, even ten years ago, we will conclude our sketch by the repetition of a well-known colonial anecdote, the truthfulness of which is too well known to be disputed. One of the banks, with that haste and want of care customary to the period, got possession of a large allotment in Collins-street without inquiring very curiously into the rights of the person from whom they purchased. Their possession remained undisputed, so, without paying any further attention to their title, they built an expensive stone edifice on the spot. Shortly after, a whaling-ship which had been absent some years came into port, when, to their astonishment, a sailor walked in with the original Crown grant, which, with other documentary evidence, proved him to be the real owner. The directors, on looking into their title, soon found it was useless; so they had to compromise with him by a payment of £20,000, or else to comply with the modest request he addressed to them—namely, "Either give me the money, or take your house off my land into the next street, or anywhere you may fancy."

A. A. S.

LOVE-BOAT SERVICES.—During a strong gale from the east and a heavy sea, on Sunday last, the Filey life-boat of the National Institution went out to a vessel about two miles off, which was seen to have lost her masts and was drifting towards land. The life-boat took off the crew of four men from the vessel and brought them safely ashore. Great praise is due to the life-boat crew for their services on this occasion. The vessel proved to be the schooner Kate, of Lynn, bound from Middlesboro' to that place with coals; Charles Newby, master. She had lost her masts by lightning. She afterwards went on shore on Filey beach, and has since become a total wreck.

SUSPECTED POISONING.—Dr. Pritchard, a medical gentleman in good position and practice in Glasgow, has been apprehended by the authorities on suspicion of poisoning his mother-in-law and his wife. An investigation is going on, and Professor MacLagan, of Edinburgh, has made a chemical analysis of the viscera of Mrs. Pritchard, and reports that he had found antimony abundantly in the liver, spleen, intestines, and blood. A warrant has been issued for the exhumation and examination of the body of the doctor's mother-in-law, Mrs. Taylor, who died in his house some months ago.

THE NEW RAILWAY WORKS AT SMITHFIELD.

A FEW weeks more and the great landmark of Old London will be lost sight of, even though it may not be "to memory dear." The future paterfamilias, in walking from the City through what were once Moor Fields to the spot which he will remember as the foot of Holborn-hill, will gaze about him in a little perplexity, and, until he shall have discovered the bearings of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and the church originally built by Prior Rahere, will be uncertain of the former whereabouts of Smithfield. It has had an evil history belonging to it, this same plot of ground, from the time when it was a smooth, marshy piece of waste land, darkened by the shadow of half a dozen gibbets, to the periods when the brave shows and jousts were held there to cheat the people into good humour in spite of bad laws, and when the brawls of the tournament, the market, and the court of "pied poudre" were eclipsed by the dark age of persecution that brought in the faggot and the stake.

In our own time, too, the place has had an unsavoury reputation, as being associated with all the foul horrors that belong to slaughter-houses, horse-boilers, and sausage factories, huddled together in a dense and crowded neighbourhood; while the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was for a long time, though an every-day necessity, totally unable to mitigate the barbarous exhibitions of brutality seen in the cattle-pens of the great metropolitan market. Now we have, happily, changed all that. The New Cattle Market, the new abattoirs and all their appliances, prevent the necessity for sheep and oxen being driven through the streets at all hours, and night is no longer made hideous by the hoarse profanity of drovers and the less startling baying of their more intelligent dogs.

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has still its work to do, even in the present market; but the public is spared the sight of torture and the danger to which every passenger once was liable in crossing the very centre of London. The very posts and rails which were once the pens of Smithfield have been removed, and some of them have been devoted to the purpose of forming oaken tables and chairs for furnishing an antiquarian library.

Standing in the centre of Smithfield, opposite St. John-street, and looking towards Long-lane, some idea may be obtained of the magnitude of the present work; for, although much of the area is concealed by hoardings—where the London public are reminded of their religious, social, and sensational amusements, in letters 3 ft. long—the nature of the railway operations are to be seen in the tremendous upheaving of the entire surface; in the mighty trench where an army of labourers are wheeling barrows on narrow planks, digging, picking, levelling; or busily building the enormous subway, the tunnel of which seems to have been suddenly discovered, rather than to have been constructed, so rapidly has it appeared.

The magnitude of the excavations here will be better understood from the fact that at Smithfield, the general terminus of the Metropolitan Railway, an immense underground area will be formed for the reception of the meat and poultry coming to the new market to be erected on part of the present site. These consignments will be raised to the market from below by means of lifts; and, if the market itself is to supersede Leadenhall and Farringdon, the business will need some such appliances to keep the lower area clear for the ordinary traffic.

We have already, in an article on the Thames Embankment, explained the route of the Metropolitan or Underground Railway, which will shortly encircle London; and how, from Farringdon station, it will be carried on to Smithfield and there meet the extension, which, coming through the Thames Embankment, completes the circle by cutting through Bishopsgate and Finsbury.

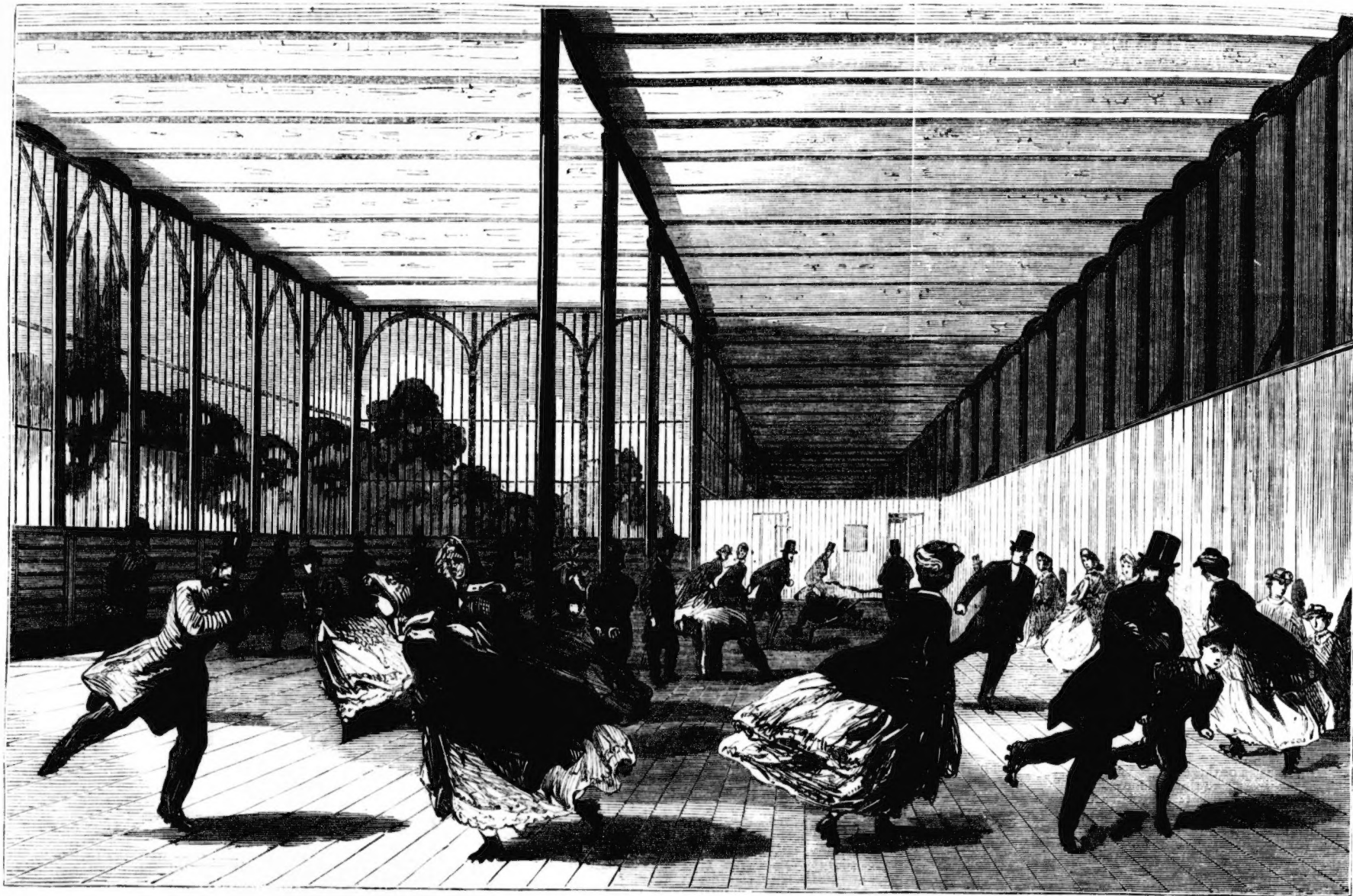
The extension to Finsbury commences near the bottom of Ray-street, a few yards from the Clerkenwell Sessions House, the spot famous as the site of "Hicks's Hall." From this point of departure, on its course eastward, the Metropolitan will have four lines of rails. Between Ray-street and King's-cross two lines, in addition to those already at work, will be provided, and the line has already been widened to the north. Passing from Ray-street through the present Farringdon station-yard, the four lines of rails will pass under Smithfield, picking up, at the West-street junction, the traffic of the London, Chatham, and Dover, and the London and South-Western. Passing on from Smithfield, the line follows the course of Long-lane, and at the east end will be the Aldersgate-street station, which will be one of the finest stations in the metropolis. It will be 350 ft. in length, covered with a light ornamental iron roof, and will be provided with three platforms. The station will extend from Aldersgate-street to the south-west corner of Charterhouse-square; and at this spot, and for the whole distance between Smithfield and Finsbury-pavement, the railway will be open cutting instead of tunnel. The extension line then passes under Aldersgate-street without altering the present level, crosses Barbican at an angle, passes under Redcross-street, Lower Whitecross-street, Milton-street, Moor-lane, and Little Moorfields up to Finsbury-pavement. At this point this section will end, to be continued almost immediately to Trinity-square, Tower-hill, and so to complete the circle. The station at Finsbury will be a very spacious one, its area being bounded by Moor-lane and Finsbury-pavement on the east and west, and by Fore-street and New Union-street on the north and south. When it is considered that accommodation will have to be provided here, not only for the traffic of the Metropolitan itself, to be hereafter immensely augmented, but for the continued traffic of the Great Northern, the Midland, the Great Western, the London, Chatham, and Dover, and the London and South Western, it is clear that no station of ordinary dimensions would be sufficient for the purpose; and the last eminent representative of imprisonment for debt, the great, ugly building in Whitecross-street, will come down to increase the area.

These, then, are the works of which those in Smithfield will form so important a part; for some time past the Underground Railway has been regarded only as a dangerous line connecting Paddington with Farringdon-street; but, before many months have passed, it will encircle lower London, and, when the extension to Finsbury is completed, its great terminal station will be only 400 yards from the Bank of England.

FEDERAL AND CONFEDERATE CRUISERS ON THE PORTUGUESE COAST.—A Confederate iron-clad ram, called the Stonewall, was, a few days ago, in the port of Ferrol, watched by the Federal ships Niagara and Sacramento. The Confederate had put into the port for repairs, and, on these being completed, she left, followed by the Federals. The Stonewall next entered the port of Lisbon, whence she was ordered to leave by the Portuguese authorities. She had scarcely done so when the Federal cruisers entered the harbour, and were notified that they must not leave again in less than twenty-four hours. The Federal frigates, however, attempted to sail before the expiration of the time fixed by the Portuguese authorities, and were fired upon by the Belen Fort. The Niagara was struck on the poop and a seaman was killed. The vessels thereupon anchored.

SHIPWRECK.—A melancholy shipwreck took place on Sunday, about fifteen miles off Scarborough, by which five men and two boys lost their lives. The vessel, a brig, was labouring in a heavy sea when some of her timbers started, and, as she was fast settling, the crew took to one of the boats. The master, with a boy in his arms, leaped into the water and held on to the sinking ship. On coming to the surface he had lost hold of the boy, but was drifted to another boat floating on the water, into which he got. He then saw the boat into which the rest of the crew had got upset, and, as he had no oars, he could make no effort to save them. His own boat was carried by the current through the surf to the shore, where he was rescued. Another vessel, a schooner, was struck by lightning the same day and was dismantled; but, as she was drifting ashore, the crew were taken off and safely brought to land by the Filey life-boat.

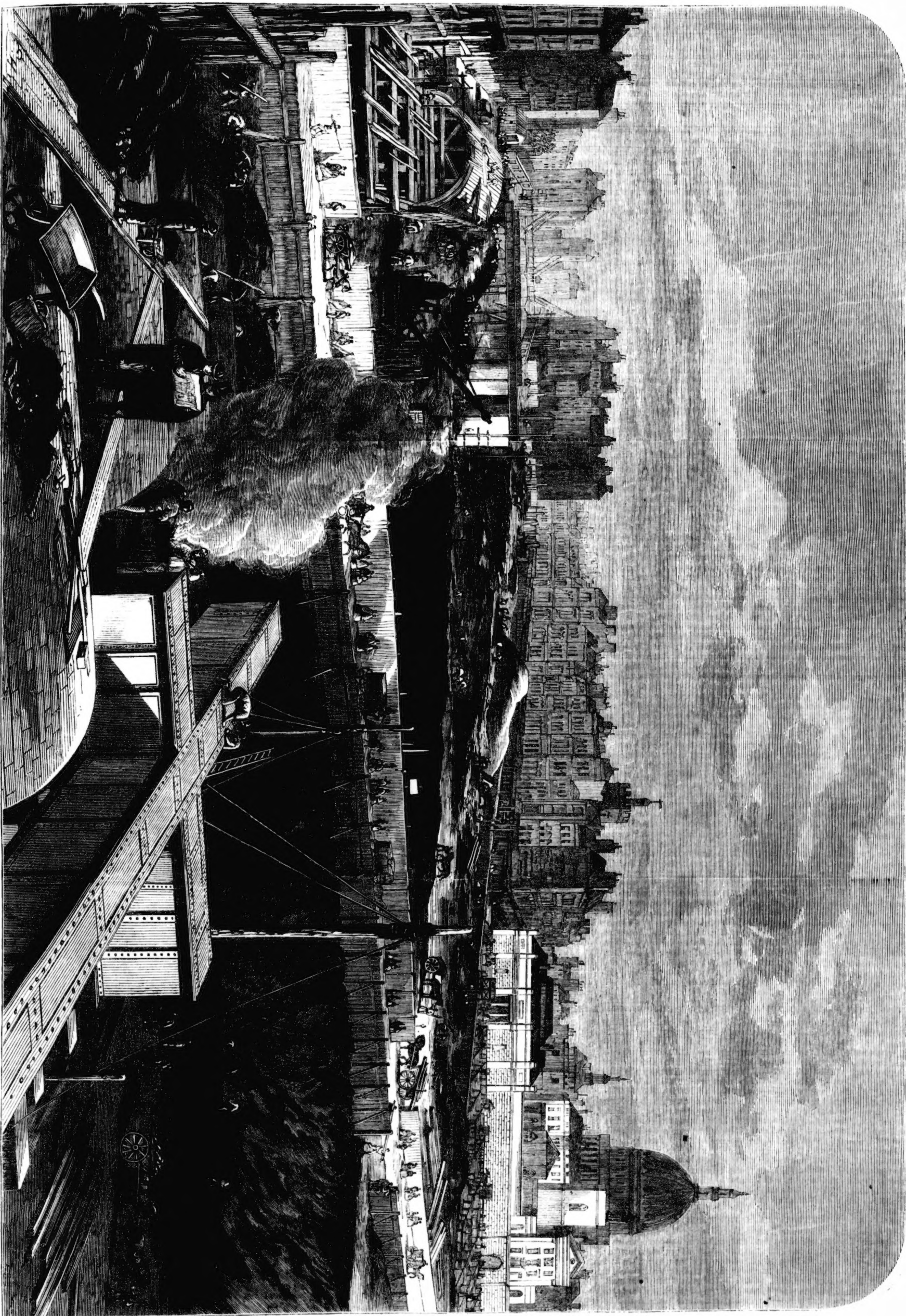
FRENCH HONEY.—A great portion of the immense quantity of honey consumed in France is supplied from the island of Corsica and from Brittany. Corsica produced so much wax in ancient times that the Romans imposed on it an annual tribute of 100,000 lb. weight. Subsequently the inhabitants revolted, and they were punished by the tribute being raised to 200,000 lb. weight annually, which they were able to supply. Wax is to honey in Corsica as one to fifteen, so that the inhabitants must have gathered 3,000,000 kilograms of honey. When Corsica became a dependency of the Papal Court it paid its taxes in wax, and the quantity was sufficient to supply the consumption not only of the churches in the city of Rome, but of those in the Papal States. Brittany likewise supplies a great quantity of honey, but of inferior quality to that of Corsica. The annual value of the honey and wax produced in that province is estimated at 5,000,000f.



THE NEW SKATING SALOON AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.



SCENES OF AUSTRALIAN LIFE AND CHARACTER: A LAND SALE.



THE METROPOLITAN RAILWAY EXTENSION WORKS AT SMITHFIELD.—SEE PAGE 192.

INNER LIFE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—NO. 254.

THE STORM OF THE 23RD OF MARCH.

LAST week we had a storm in the House of Commons, the like of which we have not seen for many a day. The time was one o'clock, or thereabouts, on Friday morning; there was a large number of members in the house, for that late hour—over 200—collected and held together to support or oppose Mr. Hadfield's "Qualification for Office Abolition Bill," which had glided peacefully through all its stages but the last, and now was to be sternly opposed. It was not, however, this bill which caused the row, but a much more insignificant measure—namely, a bill for enforcing certain "provisional orders" relating to the drainage of land in Ireland, which stood for second reading. When this bill was called, Colonel Dunne rose and objected to the second reading, as the bill had not been printed. Now, it is certainly a custom, if not a rule, that the House shall not be asked to read a bill a second time until said bill shall have been printed, that members may learn what the bill contains. On the face of it, then, this was a good objection; but really the objection was not good, for "the provisional orders" are the enactments of this measure, and the bill contains only three formal clauses, well known to everybody, to make said "provisional orders" law, and the "provisional orders"—all agreed to, by-the-way, by the landowners whom it affects—had been printed, and were, or might have been, in the hands of the members. The objection, then, was puerile, and the opposition factious. But Colonel Dunne, excitable, impulsive Irishman as he is, would listen to no reason. Amidst storms of applause from his party, he still persisted in asserting "that the bill had not been printed, that nobody could properly know its contents," and, in excited tones, demanded that the second reading should be postponed. However, the question was, after some time spent in spouting and shouting, put from the chair, and, upon division thereon, the motion that the bill be read a second time was carried, and, as we thought, done with for the night, especially when we distinctly heard the clerk at the table call on "The Qualification for Office Abolition Bill," and saw Mr. Hadfield rise to move the third reading. But we had reckoned without our host, as the proverb says. The Irish gentlemen had been defeated, and, smarting under that defeat, were very angry; and one of them—Mr. Hennessy, to wit—determined still to retrieve the defeat, or, at all events, to get up a row. But how was this to be done? The bill had been read, and the House had passed to the next order; and, as no question, when once settled by the House, can be again raised, it appeared to all but Mr. Hennessy that further opposition was hopeless. Mr. Hennessy, however, never despaired. Since the House of Commons was first constituted it has had no such clever, scheming, shifty, audacious member as Mr. Hennessy. He is always equal to the occasion, is never at a loss for an expedient, and his audacity never fails him. Moreover, he dearly loves a row. No Tipperary man trailing his coat upon the ground loves a scrimmage more than Mr. Hennessy. Now, it came into the scheming brain of the hon. member that, though bills are never really read, it is the privilege of members to demand that they be read—read *in extenso*; and no sooner did this brilliant thought flash into his mind than he jumped up and moved that the clerk at the table do read the bill—read it throughout. But Mr. Clerk had no copy of the bill, and, of course, could not read it. This Mr. Hennessy well knew, and he most likely knew that ultimately he would get nothing by his motion. Meanwhile he was certain of a row. He should bother Mr. Speaker and annoy him, and perplex the House, and, for a time, ride in triumph upon the winds of a storm, which he dearly loves to do. A roar of laughter and cheers burst forth when the hon. member made his motion. The Irishmen were in ecstasies, whilst Mr. Speaker looked troubled, annoyed (as well he might be), and perplexed. Cries of "Read!" "read!" echoed from the Conservative benches, mingled with cheers and laughter; and for a time it really seemed as if Mr. Hennessy had gained a point and had put Mr. Speaker and the House in a difficulty out of which there was no escape. But what was Mr. Hadfield doing all this time? Our readers may ask, for, as we have said, he was properly in possession of the House. Well, Mr. Hadfield ought to have kept upon his legs and insisted sternly upon his right; but, unfortunately, this he did not do; for a time he stood up, but at last he wavered, and then sat down. Had he resolutely maintained his position, Mr. Speaker and the House would have supported him, and Mr. Hennessy must have given way. Nor was Mr. Speaker prompt, firm, and resolute. He seemed to be taken aback by the novelty of Mr. Hennessy's demand. He should have risen, sounded out in sonorous voice, "Order! order!" firmly and resolutely kept his ground, imperatively ordered Hennessy down, and in clear and lucid phrase explained the custom and usage of the House, and shown these factious Irishmen that the House had in orderly manner, according to its rules and usages, read the Irish Bill a second time, passed to another, and could give no consideration to Mr. Hennessy's proposition. We remember well a row of this sort which broke out in the reign of Mr. Shaw Lefevre, and have still a lively recollection of the manner in which he quelled the storm. Rising calmly from his seat, he, in tones which rose above the tempest, called out "Order! order! order!" and then, seeing a knot of disturbers clustering at the bar, he peremptorily commanded them to their places. "Members at the bar must go to their seats!" he cried out; and noticing that a refractory member was still attempting to address the House, he sternly commanded said member to sit down. Before such a man as that, so stately, and commanding, and resolute, the storm sank down at once; and there was for a time, whilst Mr. Speaker explained the law and demanded the support of the House to enable him to exact obedience, a silence as of the grave, broken only by a burst of cheers when Mr. Speaker sat down. But Mr. Shaw Lefevre was a Speaker *natus non fit*. The like of him we can scarcely hope to see again. However, Mr. Speaker, set the matter right at last; and though, while he hesitated, chaos reigned, and all order, and even decency, were set at defiance, Mr. Hennessy was ultimately put down, a calm came, and Mr. Hadfield quietly moved his bill.

COLONEL DUNNE THEORETICALLY RIGHT BUT REALLY WRONG.

An now a few words upon the questions which were raised by Colonel Dunne and Mr. Hennessy. Colonel Dunne was, strictly speaking, right. Every bill ought to be, and as a rule is, printed before it is presented for the second reading. When a bill is brought in and read a first time, it is not printed. The paper which the member having charge of the bill takes up to the table is not really the bill, but only a piece of cartridge-paper folded in form of a bill, and having the title of the bill written thereon. It is called, in Parliamentary language, "a dummy." But before the second reading the bill is printed, that every member may be able to read it. But, as we have shown, this bill consists of only one clause—to confirm and make law certain provisional orders, all agreed to by the landowners whose lands are to be drained—which had been printed. Thus, though Colonel Dunne was strictly right, his conduct was simply factious. All the matter which this bill enacts was before him, or might have been; and as to the legalising clauses, they are merely formal, and are as well known to members as the taste of turtle is to a London alderman. On the following Monday, Colonel Dunne, having had time to reflect, saw all this, and ceased to oppose the bill.

HENNESSY ALL IN THE WRONG.

Mr. Hennessy was wrong, altogether wrong. In olden times, before printing was available, the clerk at the table used, when a bill was brought in, to read, first the title, and then the bill at length; and, on the second reading, Mr. Speaker would read the title and "open" the bill, either from memory or from a breviary, which it was then the custom to attach to a bill, and sometimes even read the bill itself. But this practice has long been disused. It is quite unnecessary, now that bills are printed, and, indeed, could not be carried out. A dozen bills are sometimes introduced in one night, some of them containing several hundred clauses, and if—But we need not suppose what would happen, for it must be clear that the thing is impossible. But it may be asked, "Cannot a member demand that a bill be read?" We think not. There is no "order"

giving him this right, and it is contrary to long-standing usage and practice, and that is enough; for usage and practice here are as strong as law—are law, in fact. Moreover, Mr. Hennessy was too late. When he demanded that the bill be read it had been read in regular form, and the House had passed on to the next order of the day, and could not return to the Irish bill. It is said, and reported by some of the papers, that Mr. Hennessy first rose to demand that the bill be read in extenso immediately after the division; but, if so, he was clearly out of order, for by that division the House had ordered that the bill be read a second time, and between the making an order that a bill be read and the execution of the order no member can speak. On the whole, then, Mr. Hennessy gained nothing—no profit, no honour—except the questionable honour of creating a row, the memory of which at the best will quickly fade, and perhaps be looked upon hereafter by impartial history as a disgrace rather than an honour. With respect to Mr. Speaker, we are, after due consideration given, disposed to think that he was more sinned against than sinning. No man can go beyond his gifts. There was a conspiracy to put him in a fix, and for a time it succeeded. But the discredit of this chaotic scene must be placed to the account of the conspirators, rather than to that of the Speaker.

A GATHERING OF SQUIRES.

On Monday there was a great gathering of the squires, for it had gone abroad that on that night Mr. Villiers, President of the Poor-Law Board (our old friend Villiers who used to fight year after year as a forlorn hope the battles of free trade, some time before the Anti-Corn-Law League was formed, or Bright and Cobden had risen above the horizon) was on that night to move the second reading of his audacious "Union Chargeability Bill,"—a bill, only think of it, to secure free trade in labour, and, worst of all, in agricultural labour! The audacious man! And what a phalanx of squirearchy presented itself to us on that night! There was Miles, of Somersetshire, portly and rubicund as ever. Who does not remember the name of Miles, so famous in the old corn-law wars? Trollope, too, had hurried up from Lincolnshire, as averse to change as ever; and Stanhope, too—Banks Stanhope—from the same county, who, though younger in years than Miles and Trollope, is quite as antiquated in ideas, and even more obstinate in opposition to all that savours of newness or change. Henley, too, was conspicuous, you may be sure; full of short, sharp criticisms, and prophesying all sorts of woes to the country if this dangerous measure should pass. Neither was the name of Knightley wanting on the muster-roll; the bearer of it is not, however, old Sir Charles, whom once we knew, the sturdy old Northamptonshire Tory; he has gone to his rest; he left the world no longer ago, though, than last year, and this is his son, Sir Rainald, who inherits his father's estate and honours, and his principles, and, we may say, his prejudices too. Newdegate also was there, from Warwickshire; and Ferrand, from Yorkshire; and Lowther, from Cumberland; and Dering, from Kent—name known there for centuries, and famous in the Long Parliament. But time and space would fail to call over the roll. Let it suffice to say that the muster was strong—rarely have we seen a stronger—of the genuine old English squires; and as Mr. Villiers looked upon the compact array his heart must have failed him for a time. But there was no danger. You might see this from the easy, jaunty manner of Mr. Brand and the languid whipping of Colonel Taylor. The former evidently saw that he was sure of his game; the latter could show but little zeal because, as he knew, his party was, notwithstanding all this display of force, not one in mind. Ay, there was the rub. Times have changed, and we have changed with them. Free trade notions have insinuated themselves even into Conservative minds; e.g., did not Sir William Jolliffe (Jolliffe of Sussex, late Conservative whip) rise in his place (the front Opposition bench, in close proximity to the chief himself) and declare that he entirely approved of the principle of the bill? and Tollemache (Tollemache of Cheshire, known there since the Norman Conquest, and before, as it would seem, if the name means in Saxon, as some say, Toll-the-bell)? Conservatives are divided, then, on this bill—yes, divided—and hence it is that Brand feels secure, and Taylor but languidly plies his whip, and Villiers as he fronts that threatening phalanx trembles not. The division showed that they were right; there was a majority for the bill of 72 in a house of 334 members—majority of 72 for free trade in labour! for a bill, if we think of it, readers, for the abolition of serfdom in the farming districts; or, at least, a huge stride towards that. We venture to assert that since the abolition of the corn laws the House of Commons has passed no grander measure than this. Squirearchy had better set its house in order, for changes are ahead.

Imperial Parliament.

FRIDAY, MARCH 24.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Lord Malmesbury moved for a return of the correspondence relating to the illegal detention of a Mr. Docknall in a lunatic asylum at Sedgfield. After some conversation, the motion was agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE UPPER NAVIGATION OF THE THAMES.

Mr. MALINS called attention to the petitions of the general committee of the Thames and Isis Navigation and the Mayor and Corporation of the borough of Wallingford, presented to the House on the 7th of March, on the subject of the state of the upper Thames, owing to the condition of the locks and other causes. The evils complained of, he said, affected not only the navigation but the supply of water; and, without some remedy, this great highway of the country would fall into a state of absolute decay. He asked whether the Government were prepared to appoint a Royal Commission or a Committee to consider what steps should be taken to remedy this lamentable state of things.

Mr. M. GIBSON observed that nothing had been done to improve the navigation by the reduction of tolls, repairs of the works, and arrangement with the lock-owners. He was ready to agree, on the part of the Government, to the appointment of a Committee to consider if any measures could be adopted to make the navigation self-supporting.

Some conversation ensued, after which the subject was allowed to drop.

ARMY ESTIMATES.

After some explanations upon other topics from the Marquis of Hartington and Lord Elcho the House went into Committee of Supply on the Army Estimates.

On the vote of £811,400 for Works and Buildings, which had been under discussion the preceding evening, explanations were called for by several members, and given fully by Lord Hartington.

The vote, after a long discussion, was ultimately agreed to, as well as several others.

MONDAY, MARCH 27.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

The Royal assent was given by commission to several bills. The Marquis of Westminster called attention to the case of a girl named Catherine Gauchran, who, he said, had been beaten by her friends because she refused to renounce Protestantism. He moved for papers on the subject. The motion was agreed to.

On the motion of the Duke of Somerset, the Colonial Naval Defence Bill was read a second time.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

UNION CHARGEABILITY BILL.

Mr. VILLIERS moved the second reading of the Union Chargeability Bill, the object of which is to make the poor rates on all parishes in a union uniform. The measure was in the direction of recent legislation. The approved scheme of the new poor law was to have a larger area than the parish as a basis for the management of the poor. The evils of the parochial system were manifold, and required amendment. At some length he sketched the course of legislation in reference to the law of settlement and union rating, and stated the result of all inquiry into the matter. That result was wholly in favour of extending the area of rating. He believed this bill would be a benefit to the poor and put the parochial system into a more healthy state. It did not propose to reduce the rates, but to change a system which must be changed.

Sir R. KNIGHTLEY moved that, "Considering the little knowledge this House possesses as to the practical working of the Irremovable Poor Act of 1861, it is inexpedient, without further information, to legislate on the subject of union rating during the present Session." He opposed the bill because it mulcted the proprietors in thinly-populated parishes for the benefit of distant parishes. What they

heard about labourers walking a long way to their work was all twaddle. The money of the men was spent in the parish where they resided, and there they ought to be supported should they become paupers. The bill would also injure the labourer himself, and he believed its effect would be to fill workhouses and gaols, to increase poor rates, and diminish the few remaining comforts of the people.

A long discussion ensued, but, a division taking place, the second reading of the bill was carried by a majority of 203 votes to 131.

TUESDAY, MARCH 28.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Their Lordships only sat for a short time, there being no business of importance before them.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

A SQUABBLE.

Mr. B. COCHRANE made a personal explanation in reference to something which had occurred on the previous evening, which led to a squabble between the hon. member and Mr. Gladstone, and into which Mr. Roebuck rather warmly entered. The Speaker had to interpose and put an end to the scene.

THE IRISH CHURCH.

Mr. DILLWYN moved:—"That, in the opinion of this House, the present position of the Irish Church Establishment is unsatisfactory, and calls for the early attention of Her Majesty's Government."

The O'DONOGHUE seconded the motion, and called upon the Government at the outset to state the course they contemplated taking.

Sir G. GREY unhesitatingly declared that the Government did not consider it their duty to assent to the motion.

A very long debate ensued, in the course of which the CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said that the Government were not able to support the motion; but the abstract truth of the most important part of the resolution—namely, that the Church of Ireland was in an unsatisfactory state—could not be denied. If the motion were agreed to, the Government ought to be prepared with a plan to deal with the difficulty, and they were not so prepared. The right hon. gentleman reviewed the position of the Church in Ireland, and declared it unsatisfactory. The first responsibility of any Legislature must be to adapt the laws and institutions of the country it governs to the wants of the people; and it would not do to maintain an institution which was not beneficial because a Parliament dead and gone had thought it good. Notwithstanding the severity of the penal laws against Catholicism, Protestantism had not increased in proportion to Catholicism in Ireland. It was clear, then, that the Church had made no way. At some length he discussed the nature and extent of the endowments of the Church, and pointed out the difficulty there was in dealing with the question. It was impossible for the Government to give its assent to the motion, and thereby make a promise which it would be wholly out of its power to redeem.

On the motion of Mr. GUSCHEN, the debate was adjourned to the 2nd of May.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

A DOG NUISANCE.

Sir F. HEYGATE moved the second reading of the Sheep, &c., Protection (Ireland) Bill. The enormous number of dogs in Ireland seriously interfered with the breeding of sheep by worrying them. The bill proposed that every owner of a dog should pay a registration fee of 2s. 6d.

Sir R. PEEL created some amusement by pointing out the duties which would be thrown on the constabulary by the bill. He criticised the various provisions of the measure, and said he could not support it. He would endeavour to bring in a measure better suited to meet the evil.

The bill was read a second time on the understanding that the Government would bring in a measure on the same subject.

Mr. FENWICK moved the second reading of the Sheep and Cattle Bill, which was to provide against injuries to sheep and cattle by dogs.

After some remarks from Sir C. O'LOGHLEN, the bill was read a second time.

CHEMISTS AND DRUGGISTS.

Sir F. KELLEY moved the second reading of the Chemists and Druggists Bill. It proposed that no one should carry on the business who was not registered, and that previous to registration he should pass an examination by the Pharmaceutical Society. The bill would not affect those in business before its passing, who would be entitled to a certificate to carry on their business without examination.

Sir J. SHELLEY, who had a bill on the same subject, but mainly relating to the sale of poisons and vesting the power of examination in the United Chemists' Society, would vote for this bill if both were sent to a Select Committee.

Both bills were read a second time and referred to a Select Committee.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

The Colonial Naval Defence Bill was read a third time and passed.

Lord Houghton asked whether if Serafino Pelizzoni, now lying in prison, respited by her Majesty, were arraigned for a new offence, care would be taken that he should have all the opportunities and advantages of defence, just in the same way as he would have if at liberty.

The Lord Chancellor said that the prisoner would have ample means of defending himself.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE PUBLIC-HOUSE CLOSING ACT.

In answer to Mr. COX, Sir G. GREY said he was very anxious to meet the wishes of the persons who had memorialised him on this subject, and perhaps the hon. gentleman who had charge of the bill would postpone it, in order that he might make inquiries.

Mr. COX said that, under the circumstances, he would postpone the bill until this day week.

COURTS OF JUSTICE CONCENTRATION (SITE) BILL.

Mr. LYON resumed the debate on going into Committee on this bill, and moved that the bill be re-committed, with instructions to the Committee that they inquire into the capability of the Thames Embankment as the site for the proposed law courts. The Government, he said, proposed to expend £670,000 on a site which was entirely inadequate for the purpose.

Sir H. CAIRNS expressed a hope that the House would not assent to Mr. Lyon's motion, which would be to defeat the motion for the present Session. The amendment was negatived without a division, and the House went into Committee on the bill. The clauses were agreed to after very little discussion.

HEALTH OF MR. COBDEN.—Mr. Cobden is suffering from a severe attack of bronchial asthma—the same complaint from which he suffered after meeting his constituents at Rochdale in November last. Since that time, although daily improving in health, and requiring, as he expressed himself, only a few days of summer weather for his complete restoration, he has been almost entirely confined to the house at Midhurst until Tuesday week, on which day he left for London, intending to take part in the debate on the vote for the fortifications in Canada. Almost immediately on his arrival in town he felt that he had undertaken more than his strength was equal to, and he experienced a relapse of a very severe character. During Saturday and Sunday a favourable change took place; and it is now thought that, with strict confinement to a moderate temperature, perfect quiet, and complete abstinence from public or private business, his recovery may not be long delayed.

CURIOUS CASE.—A curious record was tried on Monday, at the Assizes for Londonderry. In the month of June, 1862, Mr. Lyle, manager of the Ulster Bank, at Strabane, agreed, in the course of a conversation with a gentleman named Miller, to call his next son after him; and the latter, in return, promised £1000, for the education of the child. Miller accepted a bill of exchange for the amount, payable two years after date, "for value received;" but he died before it became due. Lyle then consulted with a solicitor, Mr. Wilson; and, although this gentleman was doubtful whether the sum could be recovered from the executors of the deceased, he bought the bill and paid £1000 for it. Wilson afterwards indorsed the bill, for value, to a Mr. Samuel Dunn, who now sought to recover the amount from Miller's executors. They defended the action, on the grounds that there was no valuable consideration for the acceptance, and that it had been obtained by fraud, to the knowledge of Wilson and Dunn. The jury found a verdict for the executors. They were of opinion that, though there had been no fraud, the indorsement of the bill had been taken for the sake of putting it in the suit, and not in the ordinary course of business.

AUTHENTIC AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE.—Mr. Seward's account of the Peace Conference in Hampton Roads, as given in the letter addressed by him to Mr. Adams, and published in this country, dextrously left it to be inferred that the proposition of an alliance for "extrinsic" war originated with the Confederates. This has had the effect which he no doubt desired, and has produced an impression unfavourable to the Southern cause. We have it on the most unquestionable authority that this suggestion is false. We published in our first number of this year the terms offered by President Lincoln through Mr. Blair, and the third of those proposals showed that the proposition came from Washington. We have now received a most important corroboration of that announcement from a different but undoubted source. A gentleman of the highest position and character, and a member of the Confederate Congress, has just arrived in England, having left the South as late as the end of January. Enjoying, as he does, the entire confidence of President Davis, he received, prior to his departure, the account of Mr. Blair's mission from Mr. Benjamin, the Secretary of State at Richmond, who used these words:—"The object of the mission was to assure President Davis commissioners would be received at Washington to open negotiations on the following basis:—All questions in dispute to be left undecided and considered as open questions. Armistice to be granted, and a league, offensive and defensive, to be made to drive the French out of Mexico." We trust that this will remove the impression that the Confederates were the first to propose a peace based on foreign aggression.—*The Owl*.

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ILLUSTRATED TIMES

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1865.

UNIONS VERSUS PARISHES.

MR. VILLIERS, the president of the Poor-Law Board, has introduced into the House of Commons a bill to extend the area of the chargeability of the poor in all cases from parishes to unions—that is, to make the collection of the rates and the administration of relief the work, not of each individual parish, but of the union, which includes several parishes. This measure is simply a partial carrying out of a principle recognised in the New Poor-Law Act, by which unions were created, as well as in subsequent legislation; and yet the motion for the second reading of the bill on Monday night was met by an organised and determined opposition on the part of the squirearchy, supported by the Conservative party generally, with, however, some honourable exceptions, among whom it is satisfactory to find Lord Stanley. The results of Mr. Villiers's bill are expected to be—1. That removals of paupers from one parish to another in the same union will cease altogether, and that even removals from union to union will be greatly lessened. 2. That the burden of maintaining the poor will be to some extent equalised by being distributed over all the parishes in a union, in proportion to the value of their property. 3. That the temptation which at present exists to drive the poor from the parishes in which they labour to others where they must reside and obtain a settlement, will be done away with. 4. That proprietors of "close parishes"—that is, parishes the soil of which is owned by from one to three or four persons, who combine to drive their labourers to live elsewhere, lest they should become chargeable to the rates—will cease to pursue the course they have followed lately of pulling down old cottages and erecting no new ones, so as to keep labourers off their lands. 5. That, consequently, work-people will be enabled to live nearer to the scene of their toil, will be thus saved the necessity of walking three, four, and even five miles each morning and night; that the energy wasted in these long walks will be available for work; and that the homes of the labourers will be greatly improved, and that over-crowding in villages obviated which is so detrimental to the health and the morals of the working classes. And, finally, that free trade in labour will be inaugurated, as the handworker will be at liberty to carry his services to the best market, without danger of obstruction from others or penalty, in the loss of settlement, to himself.

These are all excellent things, and surely to accomplish them is worth some sacrifice. Indeed, the only fault we can see in the bill of Mr. Villiers is, that it does not go far enough, and abolish the law of settlement, and consequently the practice of removal, altogether, and give the pauper the absolute right to relief wherever the necessity for it shall arise. To our thinking, there should be no territorial divisions whatever in reference to the relief of the poor throughout the entire United Kingdom. The poor, whom, unhappily, we "have always with us," are a common burden, which should be borne in common by all the inhabitants of our common country. There should be no warring of parish against parish, union against union, country district against town district, kingdom against kingdom, in this matter. For the relief of the poor and the needy, England, Ireland, and Scotland should be all one great union; the funds should be raised from the inhabitants of the whole kingdom in proportion to their means, and distributed by local officers and committees possessed of the requisite local knowledge. That, to our mind, would be a system of poor laws indeed deserving the name of national; but petty peddling in parishes is worthy only of bumbledom.

What, indeed, are the objects of our poor laws, and what are the means by which these objects are to be accomplished? Primarily, the object of a poor law is to make sure that no one unable to earn a living shall lack needful food, clothing, and shelter. A secondary object is to render it certain that those who can work and will not—who are "sturdy vagrants," as the old law phrases it, who live by working upon the good-natured credulity or fears of the community, who are, in short, "cosherers" of one sort or another—shall be punished for their idleness, or, which perhaps is the greatest possible punishment for such characters, be compelled to labour for their maintenance. And these objects are of course carried out by systematic contributions levied upon those who have enough and to spare for the benefit of those who have nothing and can earn nothing. We have, we think, fairly stated the principles upon which our poor laws are founded; and they necessarily involve the abandonment of individual and local pleas for exemption from the burden. It may be disagreeable—a hardship, even, if you will—as the opponents of Mr. Villiers's bill argue, for one parish that has few paupers, to be compelled to aid in the support of the poor of another which has many; but it is equally disagreeable, and a hardship,

for one family which, perhaps, produces no paupers, to have to bear a portion of the support of another family the members of which may be all paupers together. Rich individuals have to help to support poor individuals; and why should not rich parishes bear a share of the pauper burden of others less happily situated? The task of doing so is involved in the very idea of a poor law; and we can have no sympathy with those, be they wealthy country squires, thriving farmers, or what not, who seek to shirk their duty in this matter by driving men from off their lands, and hunting them, as they would vermin, into neighbouring towns and villages, there to huddle together in worse than pigsties, while those whose fields they till and whose crops they reap, and who grow rich by their labour, care not how or where they dwell so they do not become a burden on the land.

It is not, perhaps, surprising that the squires who opposed Mr. Villiers's bill showed that they are still very poor political economists, seeing that one of their leading champions was that Mr. Bentinck who still avows that he is a Protectionist, after nearly every other member of his party has abandoned the doctrine, and after the demonstration which the experience of the last dozen years has given us of the wisdom of another policy and the soundness of the opposite principle. But we certainly did not expect such crass stupidity and gross inconsistency as to find an opponent of Mr. Villiers's bill arguing in one breath that population was the source of wealth, and in the next declaring that its accumulation in certain parishes would render the land there of no value whatever. Possibly it is of little use to point out to such reasoners that populations will not accumulate where there are no inducements, and that if men are the source of wealth in one place they must be so in all. But even such economists as Sir Rainald Knightley ought to understand that a labourer who exhausts half his strength and energy in going to and from his work, has but half his natural power left for toil; is, consequently, worth only half what he otherwise would be; and that true economy would induce his employer to locate him as near to his work as possible, and to make his home as comfortable as may be, in order to obtain the greatest possible amount of work out of him.

We are loath to say it, but we fear it is true that the opposition to the Union Chargeability Bill has its source in the most gross and intense form of human selfishness. Sir Rainald Knightley and his followers may believe that the sympathy expressed for labourers who have to walk from six to ten miles a day and toil hard besides is all "twaddle;" they may be content to perpetuate a clumsy, expensive, inefficient, unjust, and cruel system because it saves their own pockets; but, in that case, they must also be content to be regarded by the rest of the community with the feelings which such narrow selfishness provokes. It is fortunate that all the members of the House of Commons are not country squires, as the majority of seventy-two in favour of the bill proves—a majority which, we hope, will be at least sustained in the subsequent stages of the measure through Parliament.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

THE QUEEN came to town from Windsor on Tuesday, and held her third Court for the season at Buckingham Palace, and received the principal members of the nobility. In the afternoon her Majesty returned to Windsor.

THE KING OF THE BELGIANS is at present on a visit to her Majesty at Windsor Castle.

THE QUEEN will proceed to Coburg in August, to be present at the uncovering of a statue of the lamented Prince Consort.

THE DUKE OF CLEVELAND has received the vacant Garter.

SIR HENRY WILLOUGHBY, Bart., M.P. for Evesham, was found dead in his bed on Thursday morning week.

MR. BASS, M.P., has offered to give £12,000 towards the erection of a church at Burton-on-Trent.

DR. LIVINGSTONE is gazetted her Majesty's Consul in the territories of all African kings and chiefs in the interior of Africa not subject to Portugal, Abyssinia, or Egypt.

FOUR CHILDREN were suffocated during a fire in Plymouth on Saturday morning last.

M. NELLATON, the famous French physician, it is stated, recently demanded and obtained a fee of £16,000 for going to Russia to attend a patient.

A GRAND BANQUET in honour of General McClellan was given in Rome by the Russian representative, a few days ago.

A NEW CITY is forming at North Western Australia, to be called Palmerston.

THE POPE, it is said, should matters reach a crisis in Rome, will take refuge in England, which, the Paris *Débats* says, is the best place he can go to, for he will at least have here liberty to live and enjoy his religion in peace.

THE IRON-CLAD SHIP the *Agincourt*—one of the *Minotaur* class—was launched, on Monday morning, from the yard of Messrs. Laird, at Birkenhead.

PELIZZONI, the Italian at first accused of the Saffron-hill murder, will be put on his trial for stabbing the potman of the public-house where the row took place.

PHEASANTS, partridges, and hares are multiplying fast in the woods around Geelong, in Victoria.

ABOUT 2000 BALES OF COTTON a month have recently been shipped on board the mail-steamers at Bombay for England via Egypt.

AN ENGLISH CHURCH has been consecrated at Naples on ground presented by Garibaldi. The Bishop of Gibraltar performed the ceremony and preached a sermon.

THE CROWN OFFICERS have abandoned the charges against the remainder of the persons implicated in the Belfast riots, and the prisoners have been discharged.

A PETITION OF APPEAL against the recent interlocutors of the First Division of the Court of Session was, on Saturday, presented to the House of Lords, at the instance of Mrs. Longworth Yelverton.

IDAHO is the largest territory in the United States yet organised. It is 700 miles long and 450 miles broad, and has an area of 326,373 square miles. It is twice as large as California, seven times larger than New York State, and six times larger than all England.

THE REV. ROBERT BRENNER, minister of Gorbals Free Church, Glasgow, has signalled his pastoral reign there by refusing Church privileges to a compositor employed on one of the Glasgow daily newspapers because he works on a portion of Sunday.

GENERAL LANGIEWICZ, accompanied by Count Ladislav Plater, was received on the 27th ult. by the Federal Council at Berne, whom the former thanked for their good offices at Vienna in obtaining his release.

THE PUBLIC-HOUSE CLOSING ACT of last Session—that by which houses of entertainment are shut between one and four a.m.—has been adopted in thirty towns, among which are Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham, Brighton, Plymouth, Devonport, &c.

A MASSACHUSETTS JUDGE has decided that a husband may open a wife's letters on the ground, so often and so tersely stated by Mr. Theophilus Parsons, of Cambridge, that "the husband and wife are one, and the husband is that one."

A DREADFUL ACCIDENT, arising from an incautious use of gunpowder, occurred at Marske, near Redcar, on Sunday night. One man, named Holmes, was killed, and three of his children were so frightfully burnt that there was no hope of their recovery.

ISMAIL PACHA, the present Viceroy of Egypt, has expressed his desire that the order of succession in that country may be changed, and that his son should succeed him on his death instead of his brother.

THE TOWN OF MERTHYR-TYDYVIL, although it has a population of between 70,000 and 80,000, is without a fire-engine. Tredegar, where a fire occurred the other night, is in a like condition.

A MOST EXTRAORDINARY AND DARING ROBBERY has been committed at the Central Bank of Western India, Hong-Kong, where the thieves got clear off with gold and specie to the extent of nearly £50,000.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE has issued a caution against British vessels taking munitions of war to the River Plate, Parana, Uruguay, and Paraguay.

THE GREAT EASTERN will sail from Valencia, Ireland, about the 1st of July. Captain James Anderson, of the Cunard mail-steamers China, has been appointed to command the Great Eastern during the laying of the Atlantic telegraph cable.

THE BERLIN TRIBUNAL has cited Prince Felix of Hohenlohe, whose residence is unknown, to appear and answer actions for debt. The Prince's four châteaux in Western Prussia have been seized at the instance of his creditors.

GENERAL HOOKER recently wrote to the ladies engaged in getting up the Chicago Sanitary Fair:—"While Europe, during the Crimean War, produced but one Florence Nightingale, we, of the young republic, have such a goddess enshrined in almost every household."

A SHOCKING ACCIDENT took place at the Camberwell station of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, on Tuesday. A poor fellow named Upton was crossing the line when the buffers of an express engine knocked him down, completely smashing his jaw.

THE TOTAL SUM expended for the relief of the poor in unions in England and Wales in the year ended Lady Day, 1864, was £4,835,953, of which £2,468,508 was charged to the common fund. The sum expended in Lancashire alone was £605,396.

THE BAKEWELL MAGISTRATES have punished a farmer named Birley severely for leaving four cows and a calf without food and water for several days. He was committed to prison for two months with hard labour, and ordered to pay £2 14s. 6d., or be further imprisoned for a month with hard labour.

THE AFFAIRS OF MESSRS. SPOONER AND ATTWOOD'S BANK were discussed in the Birmingham Court of Bankruptcy on Monday. After a large amount of debts had been proved, the meeting was resolved into one of creditors, and it was determined to wind up the estate by private arrangement. Mr. Laundry, an accountant, was chosen manager.

GARIBOLDI has within the last few days lost two of his most intimate friends. They were his constant companions from the time of his adventures in Montevideo up to the day of his defeat at Aspromonte. One of them was Colonel Deideri, who died at Bologna; and the other Colonel Fabbrizzi, who died at Pisa from the effects of a gunshot wound.

A MOST UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT has happened near Croydon. An old railway bridge was in process of destruction when suddenly an arch fell, and six men were buried under the ruins. Two were taken out dead, and the other four are so much injured that there is little hope of their recovery.

PROFESSOR KISS, the well-known Prussian sculptor, is dead. He died suddenly a few days ago, in Berlin. Kiss's statue of the Amazon is a work of art well known in England. It was one of the lions of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Lately it stood, and we presume still stands, in front of the Museum in Berlin.

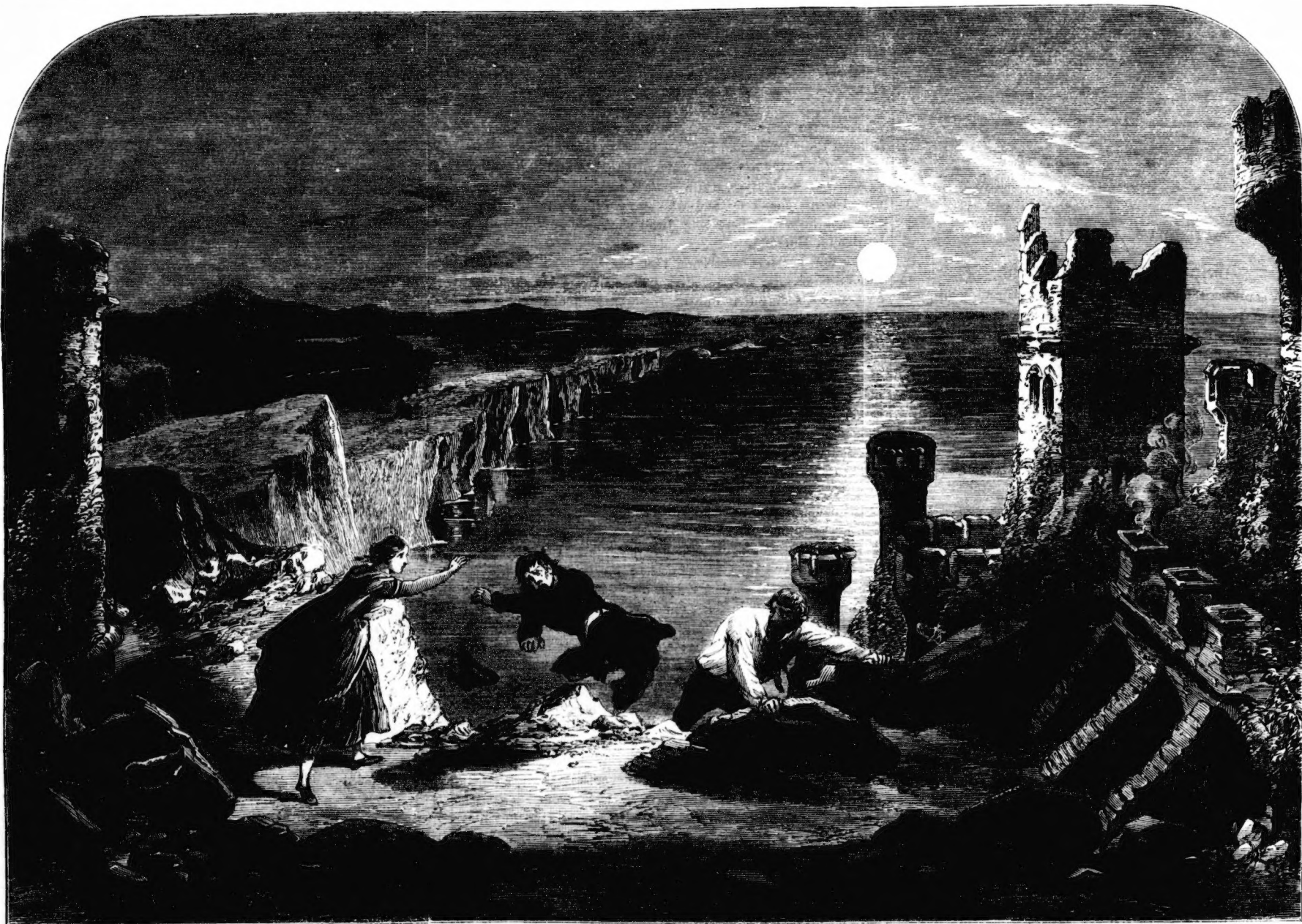
"ARRAH-NA-POQUE" AT THE PRINCESS'S THEATRE.

"THE harp that once through Tara's halls the soul of music shed," or, rather, the national spirit that swept the strings of Tara's harp, has often been invoked, and usually with success, by literary men who were compatriots of Robert Emmet, Daniel O'Connell, and Tom Moore. That the English people deplore the bad effects of their own misgovernment, and are ready to sympathise with the oppressed, even when they themselves are supposed to be the oppressors, is an equally patent fact; and the spirit of the harp and the liberality of modern English sentiment have never been invoked with greater success than by Mr. Dion Boucicault in his new drama of "Arrah-na-Pogue; or, The Wicklow Wedding." Of the drama, an account will be found in another portion of these columns. Of the particular scene chosen by our Artist for illustration some further description is necessary. Shaun, an Irish carman, is doomed to death for a crime of which he is innocent—he dies for the love of Arrah-na-Pogue, and from a feudal fidelity to the M'Conl, his hereditary chief. As he sits in his dungeon he hears the voice of Arrah singing to him from the summit of the watch-tower. The prisoner is captive in Ballybetagh Castle, a fortress overlooking the sea. The masonry outside the window of the cell is old and broken, and Shaun shakes it till it falls into the water. The idea then seizes him to climb the keep by means of the ivy on the crumbling walls. He may as well perish in the Atlantic in seeking one last look of his love as die by the bullets of the soldiers on the morrow. And here we would point out the superiority of the motive of the escape of Mr. Boucicault's hero. He is no commonplace fellow evading his sentence, but a lover who would again look on the face of her he loves at the risk of almost certain death. It is a bright moonlight night, and Shaun is seen climbing up the walls. In sight of the audience, who are supposed to see from the climber's point of view, the castle sinks—an effect which is managed by an admirably contrived sinking diorama. The appearance of immense height and danger is given as the arms and feet of the hero grasp the rustling leaves. Buttress after buttress, platform after platform are passed, when, nearing a rampart situated in an upper part of the fortress, a branch of ivy breaks, and for a moment Shaun loses his hold. He catches another branch and grips it with the tenacity of despair, but the sentinels have heard the noise. "Who goes there?" rings through the night air. They look over the walls, but, even with the aid of lanterns, fail to see the cause of their alarm, for the ivy broken by Shaun's weight has fallen over him and conceals him from their sight. This is, in modern terms, the great "sensation" of the piece, and is, without exaggeration, a terribly thrilling one to witness. In the playbills, Arrah's song and Shaun's escape are happily described as "The Magnet of Love, and how Shaun, by its influence, is drawn from his cell." The keep, the ivy-wall, and the watch-tower, all of which are portions of the same diorama, are the work of Mr. Lloyd.

"THE WOMAN IN MAUVE," AT THE HAYMARKET.

SENSATION is a literary and dramatic disease which induces satiety and torpor, and Satire is the only physician to remedy it. At the Haymarket, so long the chosen home of elegant comedy, Mr. Watts Phillips has elected himself *le Médecin pas malade lui!* and his Sensation in Three Spasms, entitled "The Woman in Mauve," is the latest vehicle chosen by Mr. Buckstone for the display of the talents of Mr. Sothern and the light troupe of which Mr. Buckstone is commanding officer. "The Woman in Mauve" is a striking but not a very delicate satire, and will be best appreciated by those who are thoroughly conversant with modern novels. Of a certain class and modern dramas of the sensational school. Upon this point, however, our limits will not permit us to dwell. Our Illustration reproduces the second and last scene of the first act—a moonlit garden looking on the Thames at Chelsea. While reading, "The Woman in White," an artist, named Jocelyn, has been startled by the sudden apparition of a woman in mauve, who wildly demands of him, if he would save a human life, the key of his garden-gate. While Jocelyn is wondering at her appearance and request, a pistol-shot is heard, and the woman in mauve vanishes, exclaiming, "Too late! too late!" Jocelyn rushes after her, and finds her stooping over the lifeless form of a young naval officer. Who is the woman in mauve? Who is the young naval officer? Why did he shoot himself? What fearful link has united their destinies? What terrible secret was between them? This is the riddle proposed to the audience at the theatre, and elucidated farcically and sarcastically in two succeeding acts. As these two acts have been already described in the ILLUSTRATED TIMES, and are nightly to be seen at the Haymarket, further speculation is unnecessary. "The Woman in Mauve" is in itself a fragment, and any remarks upon it must of necessity be fragmentary.

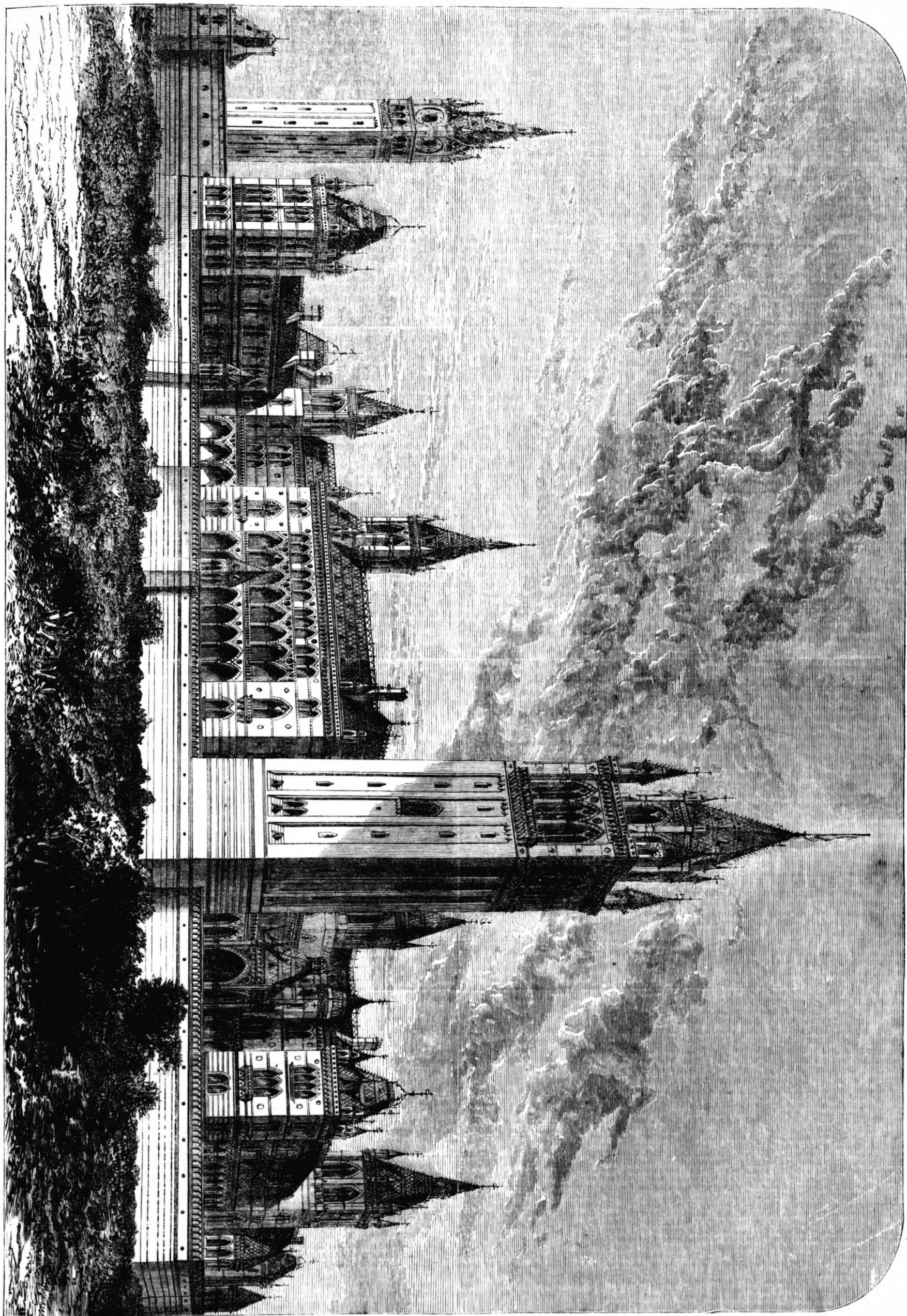
J. F. LEWIS, Esq., R.A.—The Portrait of Mr. John F. Lewis, R.A., that appeared in our last week's Impression, was engraved from an excellent photograph by Messrs. John and Charles Watkins, of Parliament-street, who have taken a comprehensive and highly interesting series of portraits of eminent British artists.



SCENE FROM "ABRAH-NA-POGUE," AT THE PRINCESS'S THEATRE: THE ESCAPE OF SHAUN "THE POST."



THE "FIRST SPASM" IN THE "WOMAN IN MAUVE," AT THE HAYMARKET THEATRE.



THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES AT SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, SYDNEY.

SYDNEY, as viewed from the flagstaff-hill, is certainly one of the most beautiful and picturesque cities in the world, mainly in consequence of its charming environs, where is every effect of land and water under a clear blue sky.

The tortuous ramifications of the harbour appear from this height like part of a hilly country with the valleys inundated, and the white drift sand which covers the suburban hills on the south remind one of snow in a place where it is scarcely ever seen. All around there appears something anomalous in the landscape; yet, on a clear day—and most days are clear in Sydney—the scene is surpassingly lovely.

It is true that the town itself, on the south and south-east, derives a great deal of its enchantment from the distance which is proverbially necessary to accomplish such a condition; but, nevertheless, and despite its resemblance about the quays to an etherealised Wapping, the mass of white buildings, unsullied by smoke, suggest the idea of marble structures. On a closer acquaintance, it will be found that the peculiarity of Sydney is its truly British appearance. At one point it is a strongly resembles the entrance to an English market-town. By the waterside it is, to a great extent, the repetition of the real British seaport; and even George-street, its wonderful main thoroughfare, a mile and a half long, instead of being a straight, broad, correct, regularly-built avenue, is, or was, a genuine old English "turning," broad and not ugly, it is true, but, like other streets in Sydney and in this country, "meandering" at all sorts of curves, and filled with incongruous buildings in every style, or in no style, of architecture. In truth, there are numerous other features which render Sydney truly British—none more so, perhaps, than the appearance of the people in its streets. Its butchers, bakers, and itinerant vendors are like ours; there are few foreigners, except, perhaps, an occasional Chinese or a New Zealander; and but for the occasional sight of the native trees and shrubs blooming or bearing fruit with strange, leaf and blossom, the visitor might fancy himself in some fine, old, healthy seaport of the mother country.

The fact is that most of the houses are built and the rooms furnished in the English fashion, although it can scarcely be said that bare, blank-fronted tenements, with flat staring windows, are so well adapted to a semi-tropical climate as some other style of architecture might be.

There are few climates in the world less destructive to architectural adornments than that of Australia, and, Sydney being built upon quarries of freestone, has inexhaustible materials for building. As far as private houses go, these facilities have scarcely been made good use of; but there are several fine public edifices in the town including the various churches, the library, and the courthouse. Amongst the most conspicuous, however, will be the new Government buildings, which are represented in our Engraving.

The site selected for the new public buildings at Sydney is in what is called the Domain, at the entrance from Macquarie-street, and adjacent to the present Legislative Chambers. The ground—which is admirably adapted for the purpose—has an elevation of 102 ft. above high-water mark, with a fall from the site on the east, north, and west sides, more especially on the east, towards the entrance to the harbour.

The building is divided into two main blocks—the Government offices and Parliamentary buildings—and arranged in such a manner as to admit of their being built separately or together. The Government offices are placed on the west, towards Macquarie-street, as this side affords more ready access, at different points, from the direction of the city. The main entrance, which forms also a general entrance to the entire buildings, is placed in the centre of this front, with additional entrance, besides angle towers; by which, and the arrangement of staircases and corridors, any one of the departments may be approached directly without passing through others. The offices of the chiefs of principal departments are placed on the ground floor; the subordinate offices above.

The Parliamentary buildings, occupying the eastern portion of the site, are divided from the Government offices by two spacious courtyards, direct communication, however, being preserved on the level of the upper floor by staircases connecting both blocks. The principal entrances to the chambers are from these courts, which are approached by gateway towers on the north and south sides, the former, the entrance to the Legislative Council, being immediately opposite the entrance to the Governor's residence, from which a straight avenue will lead to the north gate-tower. A state-carriage porch entrance is also provided on this side, in the wing beside the large tower. The entrance to the Legislative Assembly occupies a corresponding position on the south side. The Legislative Chambers are placed east and west, the centre of the Parliamentary block being occupied by apartments common to both Houses, such as library, record-rooms, refreshment-rooms, &c.; over the latter and the smoking-rooms is placed a large apartment, available as a picture-gallery, reception-room, &c. These rooms, together with retiring-rooms for President, Speaker, &c., occupy the east front, overlooking terraced pleasure-grounds, the whole commanding a fine view of the entrance to the harbour. The ground floor of the large tower—beside the state entrance—forms a state chamber; the upper portion of the tower is available for fire-proof rooms for records, &c. The assembly committee-rooms (on upper floor) occupy a portion of the south front, and extend into the wing overlooking pleasure-grounds. The council committee-rooms are placed in a corresponding portion on the north front. Accommodation is provided at convenient parts of the basement for messengers, &c.; also a large kitchen, and offices, in connection with refreshment-room. The south front forms one side of a grand square, which is proposed to be formed by the removal of some small houses intervening between the site and the present chambers. The opposite side of the square is to consist of a new wing connected at the Macquarie-street end with the present chambers, which can then be applied to other purposes. Adjoining this, on the south side, are situated the hospital grounds, Royal Mint, Hyde Park Barracks, &c., so that the chief Government establishment would be placed in convenient proximity. The centre of the grand square is immediately opposite the line of Hunter-street, which runs at right angles from Macquarie-street, westwards; this line, continued eastwards through the Domain, strikes exactly at the entrance of the Botanic Gardens.

Sandstone of a good quality is available as a building material; in fact, the foundation of the structure is sandstone, which is found at a depth of more than 5 ft. below the surface. Timber of excellent quality for carpentry work is to be obtained in the colony, while cedar and other woods may be had for fittings, &c.

The cost of the building, as estimated for the Government by the colonial architect, is about £650,000.

HEAVY PACKETS BY POST.—On and after to-day, the 1st inst., any packet whatever, with the following exceptions, posted for transmission from one part of the United Kingdom to another, which may be found to exceed two feet in length, or one foot in width or depth, will be stopped and sent to the returned-letter branch. The exceptions are as follow:—1. Packets to or from any of the Government offices or departments or public officers. 2. Petitions or addresses to the Queen, whether directed to her Majesty or forwarded to any member of either House of Parliament. 3. Petitions to either House of Parliament forwarded to any member of either House. 4. Printed Parliamentary proceedings.

THE DISPUTE IN THE IRON TRADE.—A meeting of the North Staffordshire ironworkers and their masters, in the presence of Lord Lichfield, took place, on Wednesday, at Stoke. It seems to have ended abortively. The masters insisted as a *sine qua non* that the men should go to work at the reduced rate of wages, and that then the differences between them should be referred to arbitration. To this the men declined to agree. They would not go to work at the wages the North Staffordshire men had accepted, and the quarrel seems now as far from being healed as ever. The masters will now probably introduce men from other districts to North Staffordshire, and thus get their works open again. The London trades' delegates met on Wednesday night, and passed resolutions approving of the conduct of the North Staffordshire men and promising them support. In the Durham district the workmen have resolved to sever the connection with the Staffordshire unions, and the masters have promised to open their works, whatever decision may be come to by their brethren in Staffordshire.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

It is now known that the severe defeat of the Government on Mr. H. B. Sheridan's motion to reduce the duty on fire insurance might have been avoided. Mr. Sheridan was not anxious to bring forward the motion, and would have postponed it if he had been asked to do so by Mr. Gladstone. This was made known to the Government whip, but, as no sign came from Mr. Gladstone, no word, directly or indirectly, Mr. Sheridan was, of course, obliged to move his resolution and push it to a division. This conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is very strange. It would seem that he courted a defeat, for defeat was certain long before the division. But why he should do this is inexplicable. The gossips say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer remembers still, with bitterness, his fight with the hon. member for Dudley on the subject of a certain life insurance society; and hence his refusal to condescend to make any overture to Mr. Sheridan. But can such small passions reign in celestial minds? This miserable policy, whatever was its cause, has strengthened the impression that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will never be able successfully to lead the House of Commons. And yet who but he is there to take this post, when that event—the death or resignation of the noble Lord at the head of her Majesty's Government—so often foreshadowed, but still postponed, and yet inevitable, shall occur? Echo, from the cavernous future, answers, Who? and nothing more. There is, however, this consolation—the occasion makes or brings out the man.

Ad interim. What is the meaning of the startling speech which Mr. Gladstone delivered on Tuesday night upon that vexed question the Irish Church Establishment? The Conservatives say it was a most dishonest speech. The advanced Liberals chuckle over it as an evidence that when the event which I have alluded to shall come—as come it must soon, unless the Destinies have retired from business—and the Conservatives shall come into power, as they probably may for a time, Gladstone will lift his anchor, sail away from the old Whig moorings, and lead the said advanced Liberals. This is the vaticinatory gossip of the clubs. But I, who heard this speech, and have carefully read it since, can see in it no such foreshadowings. The speech, as it appears to me, was not dishonest, neither was it prophetic, but is simply the expression of thoughts which thousands of honest, reflective politicians have long entertained. The position of the Irish Church is, to use Mr. Dillwyn's word, "unsatisfactory," an anomaly, a solecism, and the cause of much bitter feeling in Ireland. In short, this Church is a huge wrong. But how is the wrong to be remedied? That is the question. Mr. Gladstone can see no present remedy; nor can I; nor can any man with whom I have conversed on this subject. It will require sharp surgery to eradicate this wen. Nothing short of a revolution, or something like it, will root it out, and for that we are not prepared. I see nothing dishonest, nothing prophetic, in Mr. Gladstone's speech. He has said nothing more than our greatest statesmen, all the travellers who have described Ireland and its institutions, and all the best writers upon Irish history, have said before him. It was an eloquent speech that he delivered; but there was nothing new in it—nothing to shock Conservatives, nothing to give hope to the Radicals.

The Edmunds scandal is still in the crucible, and shortly we may expect the residuum of facts presented to us in a report. Meanwhile, an incident or two coaxes out through the keyhole of the closed door. Here is one on which, my informant says, you may rely:—My Lord Chancellor was under examination, and was answering the questions in very low tones—so low as to be inaudible to some of the noble Lords and others present; whereupon a member of the Lower House, who had got in surreptitiously, had the imprudence to call out, "Speak out, my Lord!" This nettled the irritable Lord; and, turning round, he said, in his usually mellifluous voice, "The honourable member has such long ears that I should have thought that he could hear every word." This is a man not to be trifled with. If he is to die, he will die hard. The *Standard* notes that he was not present at the last Cabinet meeting, and argues, from his unusual absence, "the beginning of the end." And it may be so. Rumour, with her hundred tongues, says that the current is running strongly against him; and, further, that he is unwell. He was, however, as I can aver, on the woolsack on Monday, when certain bills received the Royal assent by commission, for I saw him there and heard him read the commission.

The Committee appointed by the House of Commons to investigate certain alleged forgeries of signatures to petitions presented to the House in favour of Azeem Jah have come to the conclusion that a vast number of the names were forged, and have summoned the suspected forger to appear. He, however, having the fear of incarceration in Newgate before his eyes, has wisely made himself scarce, as the cant phrase is, and will, unless he be infatuated, keep in the dark until the end of July; for this forging names is a heinous offence, and it is very likely that, if the Committee could catch the offender, he would be proceeded against in a court of law, and get himself sentenced to a few years' penal servitude.

And now, a word or two about the said nabab—Azeem Jah, Nabab of the Carnatic, as he was or ought to have been—uncle and heir (he says) of the late nabab, but cruelly spoiled by the English Government of his nababship, as Sir Fitzroy alleged. Did any of your readers peruse Sir Fitzroy's speech upon the nabab's wrongs? Perhaps they did, and perhaps they wept over the affecting picture which the artist drew of the penury and destitution of the nabab, contrasted with the regal splendour and magnificence which are his right. Well, reader, you may dry your tears, for a late resident at Madras, where Azeem Jah now lives, tells me that his Highness is by no means in poverty. On the contrary, he can live, and does live, in sufficient comfort, indeed, in opulent though not in royal style; and that all that tale of woe which his advocate told is—bosh!

Why is it so difficult to get humorous or comic verse that has the very necessary merit of correct measure? The cheap comic papers are horribly wanting in this respect, and even *Punch* falls lamentably short. I am reminded of this by some lines on "De Morny and de Mortuis." It seems strange taste to me to stamp on any man's grave in this way, and shriek abuse when he is beyond power of answering—and it is abuse to call a man "glutton, gambler, and lecher." But the lines won't even run nicely. Here are a few specimens:—

When the great boursier laid his sceptre down,
To one more great than he yielding the palm.

Impartial President, just and unblamed!

To think what eclipse France's sky must dim.

The Royal Academy conversazione of the Langham Club takes place to-night. Next week I shall be able to give you the result of my lounge in the studios. Why does not some enthusiastic pre-Raphaelite avail himself of the subject which Mr. Sothorn is engaged on in "The Woman in Mauve," and paint "Saint Anthony reading his Breviary by Glowworm Light"? It would be very telling and not more impossible than a good many things the P. R. B. paint.

THEATRICAL LOUNGER.

Mr. Boucicault's new drama of "Arrah-na-Pogue; or, The Wicklow Wedding," at the PRINCESS'S THEATRE, is a genuine success, and will run for many weeks to come. The plot is simple in the extreme. The scene is laid in the neighbourhood of Dublin, in that fertile year of trouble '98. Beamish McCool (Mr. H. Vandenhoff), a proscribed Irish gentleman, is hiding in the cabin of Arrah-na-Pogue (Mrs. Dion Boucicault). He has taken his own rents, which have been confiscated by the Government, on the highway from the receiver, a process-server, one Michael Feeny (Mr. Dominick Murray). The McCool is betrothed to Fanny Power, of Cabintee (Miss Martha Oliver); and on the evening of the wedding day of Arrah-na-Pogue, with Shaun-the-Post (Mr. Dion Boucicault) soldiers surround the barn when the nuptial merrymaking is at its height; find that their quarry, the McCool, has escaped; but that the notes he took from the process-server—who is the Government spy, prosecutor, and informer—are in the possession of Arrah. It must be understood that Arrah, from fear of Shaun

being compromised in the political troubles of the time, has concealed from him the fact of her having hidden the McCool. Feeny, who for years has loved Arrah, at one and the same time gratifies his avarice and his revenge by denouncing Arrah, not only as a thief, but as the hiring mistress of the McCool. The finding of a coat, the property of the fugitive, favours the supposition. Suspicions are awakened in the breast of Fanny Power, but the heart of Shaun-the-Post rises with the occasion. To save the honour of his bride, he declares the coat to be his own, and that he was the robber who stole the proceeds of the McCool estate from Feeny. This simple story is complicated by the love of a noble-hearted Irish gentleman, the descendant of Kings (as Thackeray said, "No doubt you and I, dear reader, are also descended from Brian Boru"), The O'Grady (Mr. John Brongham), for Fanny Power, and in the ingenious schemes successfully adopted by that young lady for making herself miserable. In the second act, Shaun is tried by a court-martial, and condemned to death. In the third, as he sits in his dungeon, he hears the voice of his Arrah singing, and, escaping through the grated window of his cell, climbs by the ivy to the top of the ruins of the castle—Ballybegagh Castle—an edifice that is at the same time a barrack and a ruin, and which overlooks the sea. A particular account of this wonderful effect will be found, in addition to a pictorial illustration, in another portion of these columns. On the summit of the watch-tower Feeny points out to the sorrowing Arrah the figure of her husband climbing the walls. He threatens to alarm the guard, or to hurl a stone upon him, unless she consents to his wishes. At this moment the hand and arm of Shaun are seen to grasp Feeny's legs. A desperate struggle ensues, and Feeny is hurled into the sea, and, as the spectators hope, much hurt, if not killed. The McCool is pardoned, and, as he has confessed that he robbed the receiver, everybody is made happy, including the audience, whose glistening eyes, liberal use of handkerchief, opera-glass, and palms bear witness to the pleasure derived from the best drama that has been produced since the famous "Colleen Bawn." The dialogue is full of those Hibernian gems which I will call, for want of better nomenclature, *pathetic bulls*—that is, phrases where the direct absence of logic is more powerful, expressive, and truthful than logic itself. There are many of these Irish diamonds scattered through the work. "Why shouldn't Shaun hear us?" says the rascally process-server: "Sure, Arrah, I'm not ashamed of my love for you!" "No!" replies Arrah, "you're not, but I am! I wouldn't like Shaun to think so meanly of me as that you could love me!" This is charmingly Hibernian and feminine. And, again, upon a question of money, Arrah says, also of the process-server, "The mean thief! I believe he thinks sweethearts pay one another!" The acting of the new drama is all that could be desired. Mr. and Mrs. Boucicault are as happy in their new characters as in Miles-na-Coppleen and the Colleen; Mr. John Brongham gives a most finished picture of the "real old Irish gentleman" as he existed, and still exists; and Mr. Dominick Murray advanced himself several degrees in public estimation by his admirable performance of the sneaking process-server; Mr. Vandenhoff was a gallant and manly exile; Mr. F. Charles a very perfect Englishman—according to the Irish notion of Englishmen; and Miss Oliver's dark eyes and charming voice were welcome as ever, the more so that she has been some time absent from London. One thing I must mention—the capital acting of the minor characters by native Irishmen brought by Mr. Boucicault from Dublin. "It's themselves that are the real boys," and by themselves I mean the new arrivals, Messrs. Reynolds, Dowling, Bentley, Andrews, and Burke. I would particularly commend Mr. Reynolds as Oiny, who kept his long frieze coat tucked up behind him, ready for a dance, a flight, a fight, or any other Hibernian emergency. I will not do Messrs. Telbin and Lloyd's scenery the injustice to attempt to describe it. Their names are sufficient guarantee of its excellence, fidelity, and effect.

A large number of very fashionable people attended the BLOU THEATRE, on Wednesday week, to witness an amateur performance "in behalf of a Baronet and his family reduced to great poverty." The Prince and Princess of Wales, the Duchess of Cambridge, and Princess Mary (Princess Mary, as I thought, looking lovelier than ever, if that were possible) arrived at an early hour, and the curtain rose only a few minutes after the appointed time, an extraordinary circumstance at an amateur performance. Mr. Planche's comic drama of "The Old Offender" was played with considerable spirit. Viscount Castlecliff made a very raffish rôle; the Right Hon. J. W. Fitzpatrick a senile country magistrate of the Shallow type, one, I fear, too often met with at Quarter Sessions; and Mr. Temple was an excitable, hoarse, and enthusiastic highwayman, burglar, and general conveyancer. Had not the bill informed me that Mdlle. Emilie de Vigne and the Hon. Lewis Wingfield, who played the principal characters, were amateurs, I certainly should not have discovered the fact from their performance. In the farce of "Law for the Ladies," Miss Mary Boyle acted with great tact and discrimination; and the Hon. Lewis Wingfield's lawyer was an admirable bit of character, carefully studied and elaborated—primness of manner, purity of frill, blackness of cloth gaiter, search after precedent, physical and mental indications and habits, all comprised.

Mr. Maddison Morton's new farce of "The Steeplechase" at the ADELPHI hinges on the fan arising from a man, ignorant of horse-flesh to a degree unparalleled among Englishmen, being mistaken for a jockey and compelled to ride a steeplechase. The hero of this adventure is Mr. Toole, who sports "pink" with his customary effect on the risibilities of his audience.

Mr. Fechter is to reappear on Easter Monday, and in a new part, at the LYCEUM.

At the STRAND a new comedieta, the work of Mr. Parselle, the comedian, and entitled "Cross Purposes," has been produced. It shall receive my politest attention and most careful criticism in your next impression. I may mention that Miss Milly Palmer sustains the principal character.

"Le Roi est mort, Vive le Roi!" The old Queen's Theatre is dead, and the new PRINCE OF WALES' Theatre is rising, like a Phoenix—pardon the novelty and boldness of the simile—from its ashes. The opening address has been issued, and, on the Saturday before Easter Monday, Miss Marie Wilton (Saint Marie-le-Strand, as I once heard her called) makes her curtsy as manageress. The curtain is to rise on a new comedieta from the pen of Mr. J. P. Wooler, after which a new burlesque will be produced, in which Mr. Byron has employed more than his usual strength, founded on the subject of Bellini's opera of "La Sonnambula," in which Mr. Dewar, Mr. J. Clarke, Mr. Cox, a very wonderful dancer; Miss Fanny Josephs, Miss Lillian Hastings, Miss Bella Goodall, and the directress, play the principal parts. All the débris—the accumulation of long runs of dramas devoted to piracy, theft, murder, suicide, regicide, parricide, matricide, fratricide, infanticide, and other sorts of physical horror—have been swept away, and, I should hope, buried. The audience-part of the house has been eviscerated—though gutted would be the better word—thoroughly cleaned (Hercules, what a task!), redecorated, and relighted; and on Saturday, the 15th, we shall see what we shall see.

THE SUNDAY-TRAIN QUESTION IN SCOTLAND.—A correspondence has been published between members of the Sabbath Alliance and Mr. Hodgson, chairman of the North British Railway Company. The chairman closes the correspondence with a letter, in which he says:—"The directors do not believe it to be their duty to force that portion of the public who from inclination or necessity desire to leave their homes, or to regain their homes, on a Sunday, to conform to the bidding of others who think it sinful to do so. On the contrary, while they do not hold out extra inducements to Sunday travelling by means of frequent or excursion trains at low fares, they consider that limited service by morning and evening trains is due to the public, especially the humble classes, who cannot, except by railway, move at all. With regard to goods-trains, the objections and suggestions contained in the document you have transmitted to me are founded in simple ignorance of the matter under discussion. If every goods-train which passes by necessity (and there is not one which, in a practical sense, runs from any other motive) on the North British Railway were taken off the line, the net profit of the company would not be diminished; but the insecurity and inconvenience to the community would, during the week days, be largely increased."

OUR FEUILLETON.

THE BESIEGED FOREST LODGE.

(Continued from page 187.)

III.—THE WARNING.

In consequence of what had occurred, the keeper's family spent a very disagreeable Sunday afternoon. It is true, the gun had only been fired in self-defence, and no court of law would venture to condemn the young man for what he had done, still they could not but feel that they were living at a time when courts of justice had but little authority, and mob rule was in the ascendant.

The keeper himself said nothing. He sat still in his arm-chair near the window and drommed with the fingers of his left hand on the sill. His wound hurt him a little, it is true; but he concealed the fact, and prevented anyone from noticing it. He had other things to think of besides his own slight injury.

"Is the keeper at home?" said a strange voice, suddenly, in the passage outside, and the two bloodhounds, who were lying in the room at their master's feet, springing up, ran barking to the door. The keeper raised his head, and, while some one knocked at the door, cried, "Come in!"

A young man, cap in hand, entered the room.

"Good evening, everyone!"

"Ah! good evening to you, Helzig," exclaimed the keeper.

"What brings you up here to-day? Where is your gun?"

It was, indeed, our old friend Helzig, from Hilsen, whose appearance had considerably improved since the previous year. His clothes were good and tidy, his face was clean, and his hair carefully combed. Altogether, he looked a steady, honest young fellow, which could not formerly have been said of him.

"My gun, keeper?" said he, while he blushed up to the ears.

"Ay, nowadays," muttered the keeper, "we never see one of you without a gun slung over his back."

"I thought you knew," said Helzig; "what I pro—what I told you last year. I have kept my word."

"Have you, really?" exclaimed the keeper, while a slight smile stole over his face. "Come, that is right. But sit down. You seem to have been running. Yonder is a chair. Have you come from Hilsen?"

"Yes, keeper."

"Humph! Well?"

The young man, who, in obedience to the invitation, had sat down, twirled his hat with an air of embarrassment between his fingers. He would fain have made the keeper a sign that he wished to speak to him alone; but the keeper's wife, who suspected something wrong, did not turn her eyes from him a single instant, and he dare not make any signal, for fear of betraying himself.

"Out with the business that brings you here," said the forester at last. "It certainly does not appear to be anything pleasant; but my good woman must hear it at some time or other, so it is better she should do so directly. What we do not know and fear is always worse than what we do know; so, out with it!"

"Perhaps you are right," said Helzig, although he seemed not yet to have made up his mind how to begin. "After all, Frau Haller will—"

"Come, I will help your memory a bit," said Haller, nodding kindly and encouragingly to his wife. "The fellows down in Hilsen are cursing and abusing me. They have sworn they will have my life, and mean to come and pay me a visit here."

"How on earth do you know that?" exclaimed Helzig, really astonished; for it was to bring the keeper the first information of the fact, and put him on his guard, that he had lost his breath in running up the hill.

"Well, I did not exactly know it," said the keeper, laughing; "but I thought it was so, and I read in your face, since you have been sitting there, corroboration of my thoughts. So I am right, am I?"

"Yes," said the young man, drawing breath and evidently relieved in his mind. "Since you know it, I need not mince the matter any longer. They are perfectly furious down yonder. They are shouting and raving to that extent that I could hear them half way here. They—they found the corpse and brought it into the town."

"Ah! they have been quick," muttered the keeper, clinching his teeth firmly. "Well, what more?"

"Well, they—they talked of coming up here and—"

"Come, don't be afraid, my boy," said the keeper, kindly. "Fire away, and let us have the whole charge. It is far better we should know exactly which way the cat jumps than that we should have the matter explained to us, up here, by the gentlemen themselves. What do they really mean to do? Whether they will be able to carry out their intentions is another question."

"They mean to hang you and Herr Brommer on the trees yonder, and set fire to the lodge!" exclaimed Helzig, suddenly.

"Nothing more than that?" said the keeper, laughing loudly. "They are really exceedingly moderate in their intentions. What do you think, Brommer?"

"Only let the blackguards come, that's all," muttered the latter; "we will pepper their jackets with lead in double-quick time."

"For Heaven's sake, Haller!" said his wife, in great alarm.

"Be calm, be calm, my dear," said her husband, soothingly. "These fellows open their mouths very wide and make a great noise, but the matter generally ends in smoke. Who is the man who was shot, Helzig?"

"A weaver, of the name of Hans Weidlich, one of the most worthless blackguards in the whole place."

"That is saying a great deal, considering the place is Hilsen."

"It served him right," continued Helzig, "for he had been vapouring about and threatening all last week that he would shoot you dead whenever he met you in the forest."

"Really? Well, he nearly succeeded in doing so," said the keeper, putting his hand on his aching shoulder.

"What did he really shoot you?" exclaimed Helzig, starting up from his chair.

"Ay, that he did," said the keeper's wife, joining in the conversation. "Who knows what yet may be the result," she added, with a sigh. "But a man has a right to defend his own life, hasn't he?"

"Be calm, my darling! Certainly, he has," said the keeper. "I do not reproach either myself or Brommer with what we did; and I feel convinced we can answer it before God and the law. The people yonder, however, will not listen to reason; and, were the right ten times more on our side than it really is, they would follow only their own stupid notions. The only argument they respect is a loaded gun, and with an article of that description I hope ultimately to convince them they are wrong."

"But, after all, what can you do, Franz, against such a mass?" said his wife, imploringly. "Would it not be better, after all, to ride over to — before they come, and inform the police? They would be obliged to give you troops to protect us here."

"I was going to make the same proposition," said Helzig.

"And, in the mean time, the vagabonds would come here, eh?" exclaimed the keeper. "Do what they liked to you, and, perhaps, burn the house down over your heads! No! That wouldn't do!"

"Then we will all go with you," said the keeper's wife, in whose mind fearful pictures of the danger that threatened them kept continually rising.

"That would be the best plan," said Herr von Beiwitz, who had felt extremely uncomfortable on learning the news. He had seen quite sufficient of the worthy people in the town to believe that they would carry their threats into execution.

"I cannot at the present time leave my post," said the keeper. "The lodge here is intrusted to me, and the outhouses as well. If the vagabonds find we have all decamped they will burn and plunder to their hearts' content, and I shall prove myself a faithless guardian of the property confided to my safe keeping. No! We will quietly await the result all together, only I should like my wife and children to be taken to some place of safety."

"I should die of anxiety," said his wife, weeping.

"Pooh-pooh!" replied the keeper, laughing. "If there is no one

but we men here, and if we have no cause to be anxious about you, we shall very soon settle matters with the tagrag-and-bobtail. But it is not necessary," he continued, suddenly, after reflecting a little. "We can certainly hold the dwelling-house against the rascally crew; or, if we were at last compelled to abandon it to its fate, we have got the wood behind us, and, with our rifles, can drive the gentlemen out of a too dangerous proximity. There is plenty of powder and shot in the house, is there not?"

"Lots!" said Brommer, refilling his pipe.

"I should be very willing to conduct Frau Haller and the children to —," said Helzig. "You may trust them to me, Herr Haller."

"I thank you, my boy," replied the keeper, giving him his hand; "I believe you mean what you say, and I would not hesitate a moment confiding them to your care. But my wife is right. I have been thinking the matter over. She would be far more anxious, in her state of uncertainty, anywhere else than if she remained here with us. But I should still like to take advantage of your kindness. Will you go for me to —?"

"With all my heart," replied the young man. "What am I to do there?"

"Humph! Helzig," said the keeper, gazing fixedly, but kindly, in his face, and laying his left hand on his shoulder, "I truly do not quite understand why you appear so well inclined towards me, of all men in the world. Our old account is, after all, settled, and you have hitherto honourably kept your word."

Helzig's face became crimson. He appeared to hesitate in his reply. At last he said, in a low tone,

"No, it is not quite settled, Herr Haller. I am still in your debt."

"You! How so?"

"You have made an honest man of me," replied the young man, in a determined voice. "If you had informed against me I should, of course, have undergone my punishment; but both my old mother and myself would have been ruined. At present, since that unlucky morning, and since I gave up poaching, I have diligently attended to my business, and I am earning a good livelihood. My old mother is happy, and when, in her late illness, your wife so kindly tended her and sent her all sorts of things, why, then—then I saw how much I really owed you. My wickedness," he continued, with a half-smiling side glance at the keeper, "was all on the flap of one ear; as soon as I had found the right surgeon I was well."

"You are a queer fellow," said the keeper, laughing. "Well, just as you like. But we have not much time for gossiping. Wait here a moment, and I will give you a letter for the ranger and the town council. You will return here through the forest, will you not?"

"Certainly, Herr Haller."

"I would wish you to bring me an answer, and a few trifling things as well. On your way to — you can pass by Illigstein, and give Reuben, the keeper there, a line or two. Do you understand?"

"Yes; all right."

"Very well," said the keeper, turning round to go into his own room; but he stopped short.

"Confound it!" he observed, laughing, "I never once recollected that I cannot write to-day. My arm is rather stiff, that's the truth. Herr von Beiwitz, perhaps you would have the kindness to help me. I can dictate to you."

"With the greatest pleasure," replied the young man, following the keeper into his room.

While the letters were being written, Frau Haller poured the messenger out a cup of coffee, which she had warmed, and pushed the plate of cakes towards him; and Helzig, who knew he had a long distance to go, did not need much pressing.

IV. THE UNEXPECTED VISIT.

The letters which Helzig was to take to —, a distance of about twelve miles, were at last written, and the young man set out on his way.

In them the keeper, on the one hand, informed the ranger of what had occurred, referring him to the bearer for a more detailed account of the danger which threatened him and his family; while, in the second letter, he asked the town council immediately to dispatch a military force to protect the property of his sovereign and the lives of his servants from the fury of the mob. On his way, the messenger was to acquaint the nearest keeper of Haller's position. The keeper might, perhaps, be able to send some of his people to Haller's aid until further assistance arrived.

As soon as the messenger had left, Haller told those around him that they must no longer waste the time remaining to them in empty words. The Hilsen set might be there every instant, and do whatever mischief they chose, if they only found the foresters unprepared.

In the first place, the gate leading into the courtyard, which was surrounded by walls, was fastened, and the door of the house itself closed. Two beaters and a woodman, one of whom was a married man, lived and slept up stairs, and proved a very desirable reinforcement to the little garrison. The keeper, who could rely on their fidelity, quickly acquainted them with what had happened. The house itself was the worst protected part of the buildings, unless the garden paling, which was tolerably strong, could be regarded as a kind of barrier. The walls, however, were rather substantial; and the gate, made of sturdy oak, would bear a good shock, while it could be easily defended from the upper windows. As a matter of course, the lower shutters were all closed. Brommer then filled up the two windows to the right and left of the house door partly with bricks, which were lying in the courtyard for the purpose of building a new oven, and partly with books out of the keeper's little library, in order to form a kind of rampart, so that they might the more easily defend the door itself, which they, moreover, completely barricaded on the inside.

Meanwhile, Herr von Beiwitz, actively assisted by the keeper's eldest son, Carl, was casting bullets for all the rifles, spreading plasters, and making cartridges. The three beaters, also, were fully employed drawing water from the well in the courtyard and pouring it into buckets, in order to be fully prepared against any attempts to set the buildings on fire. They had previously stopped up, with clay and wet straw, all the small openings in the barn and stable, and made loopholes over the entrance to resist any attack which might, perhaps, be made in this quarter. Both beaters had double-barrelled guns, and knew very well, by-the-by, how to use them. The woodman was appointed to act as fireman.

With pallid cheeks, but in other respects calm, and uttering no complaint, the keeper's wife contemplated these terrible preparations, announcing the worst; while the keeper passed incessantly to and fro, looking first after one thing and then the other, and superintending at every point the means of defence. He was, it is true, serious, but by no means cast down; and, although clearly perceiving the danger of his situation, firmly resolved to oppose manfully whatever might happen.

But, strange to say, nothing occurred. The evening kept wearing on, and yet nothing was heard or seen which caused them to believe a large multitude was approaching.

This revived the keeper's hopes. Going up to Brommer, who at that moment was busy cleaning and reloading his rifle, Haller said,

"I really believe, Brommer, that Helzig fancied the business worse than it actually is. I begin to repeat having written the letters in such a hurry. The vagabonds have thought better of it."

"They will come fast enough," replied Brommer, with a face completely purple, for the ramrod had stuck fast and would not be forced in or pulled out; "those fellows are a bloodthirsty set of scoundrels."

"I would willingly assist you, Brommer, but I am afraid of over-exerting myself."

"Don't you trouble yourself," said Brommer; "I will get the beastly thing out, even if I am obliged to fire it out."

"And you really think they will come, do you?"

"You may take your oath of it," replied Brommer. "When one

of these peasants gets a thing in his thick head he will butt with it against anything, even if it were a wall six feet thick. They will come, that is certain, but they'll go back again quicker than they came, I fancy."

The keeper laughed and left the young man engaged in his task. It struck him that he ought to choose some safe place for his wife and children, where they would not be so easily reached by any ball fired, perhaps, out of sheer wantonness. It was incumbent on him to prepare for the worst, although he began to hope that matters would not go so far.

The sun had long since set, and the moon threw her dim light over the gently-rustling forest. The family, in the state of excitement all of them were in, had remained up beyond their ordinary bedtime. After ten o'clock, however, even Brommer began to think they would not be molested that night, and proposed they should retire to rest. Should anything unusual happen, the dogs would bark soon enough. Besides, they might keep guard in turns with the beaters.

The keeper had just agreed to this last proposal when the dog lying at his feet raised its head and growled.

"Hollo! old boy, what is the matter?" asked the keeper, quickly pushing back his chair, and looking down at the hound.

The hound looked towards the window and continued a low growl, until he at last sprang up and began barking furiously.

"We are in for it now," said Brommer, "Knerps never makes a mistake."

Meanwhile, the men had jumped to their feet and snatched their rifles from the wall. The keeper himself was on the point of going to the window to see what was the matter. But, taking an active part in the proceedings for the first time, Herr von Beiwitz stepped up to him, and, more from long habit than actual necessity, fixing his glass in his eye, said,

"I beg your pardon, keeper, but, in my opinion, neither you nor Brommer ought to be the first to show yourselves to the fellows below. They might easily send a bullet into you, and thus, without further argument, obtain just what they want. How can we afterwards know who it was? No; allow me to manage matters with these gentlemen, or, rather, first hear what they really desire. As yet I have had nothing to do with the business, and they will and must give me an explanation."

"Oh, yes! father," added his wife, imploringly, "let Herr von Beiwitz speak to them. Perhaps they may still listen to reason. After all, they are men."

"My darling, before anything else is done, you and the children must go into your own room. You cannot be of any possible use here. I thank you, Herr von Beiwitz, for your offer. If you think it will be better, I have no objection to leaving the negotiations to you, as a neutral party. See what has brought the gentlemen here. We can then shape our proceedings accordingly. Ah! ah! there they are."

All the three hounds now began barking loudly at the same time on hearing a violent knocking outside at the door of the house. Meanwhile, Herr von Beiwitz, with a coolness for which neither the keeper nor Brommer had previously given him credit, went to the window, by the side of which, however, he first placed his loaded rifle, and, opening the casement, cried out, in the stillness of the night,

"Who is there?"

Instead of the expected words of menace, a mournful "Open the door—open the door, for Heaven's sake!" was wafted up to them.

"Yes, I dare say!" said Brommer, laughing savagely to himself. "We are not quite such fools here. At that rate anyone might come in."

"Who is that, below there?" halloed Herr von Beiwitz, who could see two dark forms, although he was unable to distinguish who they were.

"Open the door! It is I," replied the voice.

"It is 'I'! But who is that 'I'?" answered Herr von Beiwitz. Then, turning towards the keeper, he said, "There are really only two men in the garden. They must have broken through the hedge, though; for the garden gate is shut."

"Burgomaster Ellig, of Hilsen," was the answer from below.

"and—"

"The burgomaster, as true as I live!" exclaimed Beiwitz, in the greatest possible astonishment.

"Merciful Heavens! what has happened now?" groaned the keeper's wife, who had remained standing in the doorway. "Something terrible must have occurred, or be now in progress, for a gentleman like that to take the trouble of coming here in the middle of the night."

"We shall know directly," said the keeper, calmly. "Brommer, do you go down stairs and open the second window-shutter; we cannot open the door, for it is barred. Hand them a chair. By getting on that they will easily be able to climb up to the window-sill. Take care, however, to bring the chair in again."

Brommer executed punctually the orders he had received; and, while the keeper, with his wife—the children were asleep—stepped to the window to look at the unexpected guests, whose arrival at that moment was a fact of such significance, the visitors themselves remained standing, like two dark, dismal shadows, in the clear moonlight, and appeared to be waiting for the door to be hospitably opened to them. The opening of the window-shutter first undeceived them, and, after some hesitation about availing themselves of so unusual a passage, they at last disappeared into the interior of the house. The chair was then lifted in again and the shutter closed.

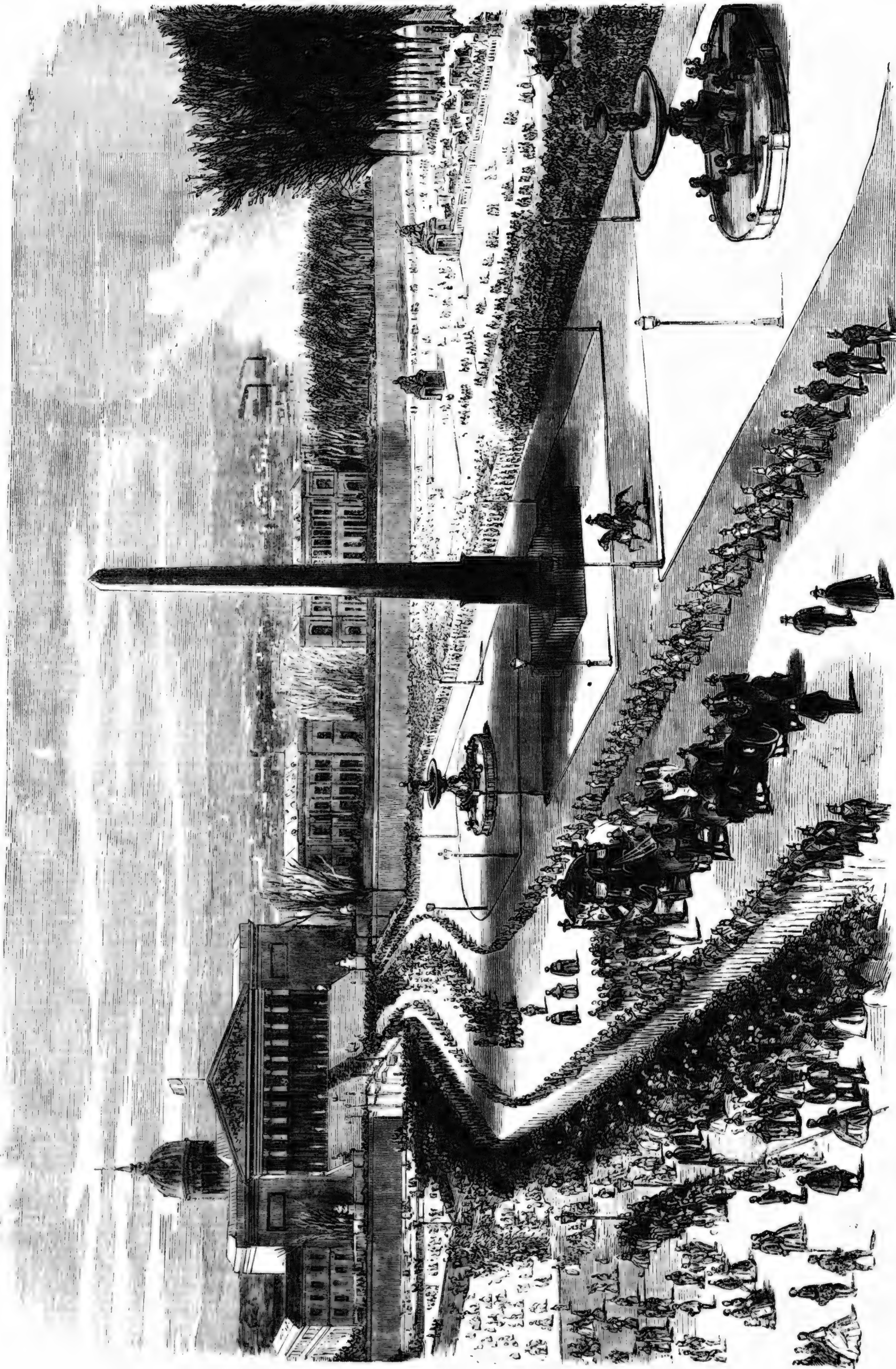
At the top of the stairs the keeper now welcomed the unexpected guests, whom his wife would insist on lighting up, and recognised in the companion of the official already named Assessor Tresselt, both from Hilsen. He was on friendly terms with both of them; for they looked upon themselves as sportsmen. They had formerly leased the right of shooting over the Government lands, and it was by no means an unusual thing for the keeper to invite them to start a fox, take part in a November battue, or enjoy the amusement of deerstalking.

Both gentlemen looked as pale as death, and were daubed all over with clay and dust. They were dead beat; and it was not until the keeper's wife had brought them a glass of beer and they had rested a little that it was possible to obtain from them an intelligible account of the reasons which had brought them to the lodge in the middle of the night. This account was by no means encouraging, and it appeared that a regular revolution had broken out in Hilsen.

(To be continued.)

A NEW KIND OF JOINT-STOCK COMPANY.—In a town in the South of England some youths have formed themselves into a joint-stock company for breeding and selling pigeons. A pair of these birds breed eight or ten times in the course of a year, and have two to a brood. Their keep costs about 1d. a week each; they will fetch 9d. each for the table when a month old, and there is always a demand for them. Fancy pigeons fetch a much higher price. The stock consists of about twenty pairs (pigeons are monogamous), which produce nearly 400 birds a year. (Not long since the company declared a dividend of ten per cent. The tumbler pigeons, which roll over and over in the air, are wittily called the company's rolling stock.)

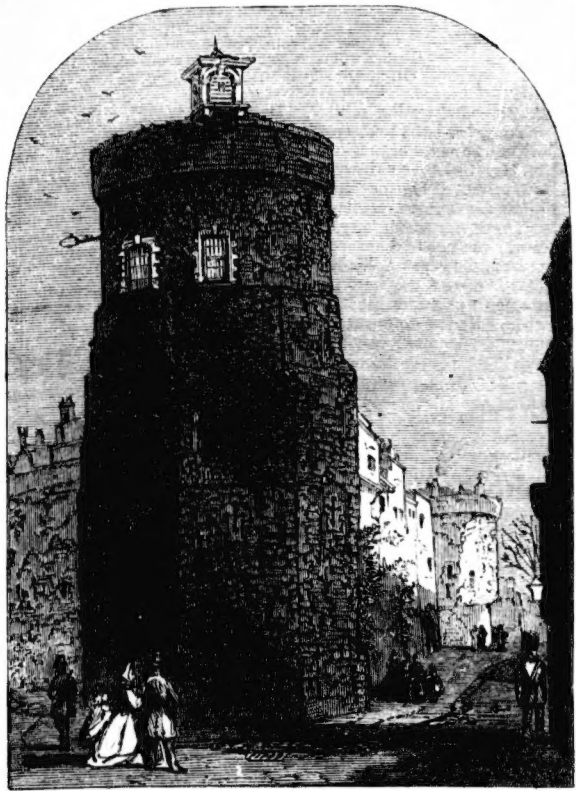
HE'LL NEVER SET THE TEMSE ON FIRE.—Many years ago, before machinery was introduced into flour-mills for the purpose of sifting the flour, it was the custom of the miller to send it home unsifted. The process of sifting was done then, but principally in Yorkshire.—The "temse" or sieve, which was provided with a rim which projected from the bottom of it, was worked over the mouth of the barrel into which the flour or meal was sifted. An active fellow, who worked hard, not unfrequently set the rim of the "temse" on fire by force of friction against the rim of the flour-barrel; so that, in fact, this department of domestic employment became a standard by which to test a man's will or capacity to work hard; and thus of a lazy fellow, or one deficient in strength, it was said, "He will never set the temse on fire." The long misuse of the word temse for sieve, as well as the superstitious of hand labour by machinery in this particular species of work, may possibly have tended to the substitution of sound for sense in such phrases as "He will never set the Thames on fire," the Mersey on fire, or any other river. I do not recollect having seen any notice of this phrase in N. and Q., and should be glad to know whether it is familiar to many persons.—F., Burslem, Staffordshire. "Glibby."—I heard this word in use in Huntingdonshire during the late frost. Its meaning was "slippery," or, as it was locally explained to me, "slithery."—CUTHBERT BEDS.—Notes and Queries.



FUNERAL OF THE LATE DUKE DE MORNAY: THE CORTEGE CROSSING THE PLACE DE LA CONCORDE—SEE PAGE 191.

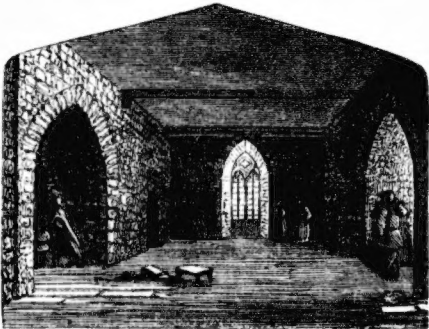
OLD LONDON WALL AND THE TOWER.

CLOSELY associated with the old wall of London—of some fragments of which we lately published Engravings and descriptions—is the Tower, which, like a part of the fortifications close by, shows



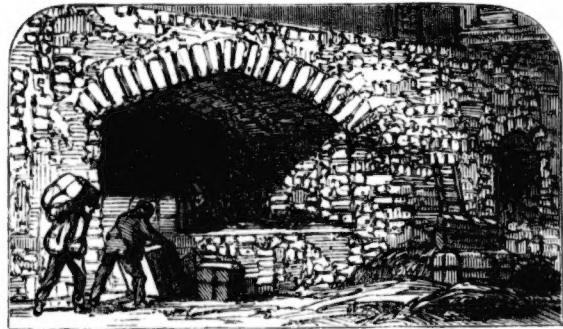
THE BELL TOWER, TOWER OF LONDON.

architectural illustrations of the Roman, Norman, mediæval, and other works; and, fortunately, this, like Westminster Abbey, still retains many of its old features. Ill-judged alterations have been



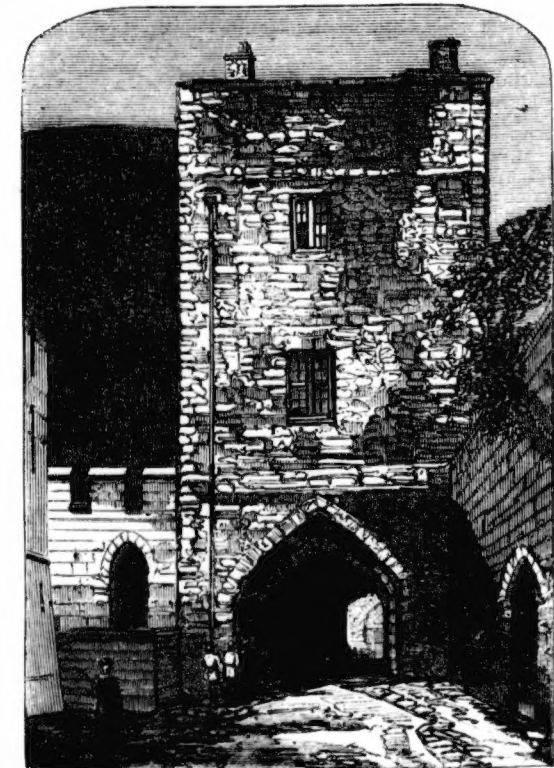
INTERIOR OF THE BEAUCHAMP TOWER, AS RESTORED.

made; but recent changes have been satisfactory, as will be seen by reference to our Engraving of the interior of the Beauchamp Tower. The Bell Tower, in which several eminent State prisoners



PORTION OF OLD LONDON WALL, NEAR TOWER HILL.

have been confined, is near the entrance from Tower-hill; at the summit is the belfry, from which the building takes its name. Besides this, within the bounds of the Tower, there was the bell



THE BLOODY TOWER, LOOKING SOUTH.

in the chapel on the green which was used for religious purposes; but that in the Bell Tower seems to have been used as an alarm to be sounded in times of fire and other danger. This circular tower is engraved as it is at present; also the south view of the "Bloody Tower," so called, it is by some said, in consequence of the young Princes having been murdered here by direction of Richard III.

In no part of this venerable fortress are the marks of modern care more visible than in the interior of the Beauchamp Tower—in which are a large number of stone records and devices, carved by the hands of prisoners, and having reference to their sufferings. In consequence of repeated coats of white-wash, and even by mutilation by some of the officers of the garrison, who had made this chamber a mess-room, the inscriptions, &c., were being rapidly obliterated. Now, however, this tower, which is so rich in historical associations, has been entirely restored, both in the interior and exterior parts, from the top to the bottom; the stone carvings have been thoroughly cleaned, and some of them look as perfect as if the chisel had just completed them. The various chambers are thrown open to visitors, who, we hope, will have an opportunity of inspecting those relics for centuries yet to come. Some of the stone marks here and in other parts of the Tower have already been mentioned in the ILLUSTRATED TIMES.

THE SHAKESPEARE BUST CARVED FROM THE REMAINS OF HERNE'S OAK.

AMONGST those old historical trees which have always been so famous in our woodland-loving country, there are few which have held so high a place in the public regard as the famous Herne's oak (now destroyed), which once stood, blasted and withered, in Windsor Forest. Most people have heard of this venerable tree, and have read the allusion to it, as to a well-known trysting-place, in Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor." It was at one time believed that the identical tree was cut down many years ago; but the controversy was never decided, and a large number of well-informed people, and some eminent antiquaries, believed that the oak was, till lately, standing in its pride alone.

It would appear that a story had been afloat to the effect that the real tree had been cut down by order of George III., when that august monarch was one day in a state of great excitement; but Mr. Jesse, who took part in the controversy, declares that, though the story was repeated by George IV., he always took care to state that the demolished oak was not the real one associated with "Herne the Hunter." In fact, it would appear that when William IV. planted an avenue he went out of his way in order to take in Herne's oak, which was perfectly bare down to the roots, the upper part being withered. It is, however, very doubtful whether this decayed tree was the original one which, according to the legend, was blasted by the wild huntsman; and many people who made inquiries (especially Dr. Bromet and Mr. Crofton Croker) declared that George III. had really, though inadvertently, had the original tree removed, with several other decayed monsters, and that it was doubtful, after all, whether anybody knew exactly which was which. Thus much for the dispute; but, at all events, it was confidently stated that in the summer of 1863 Herne's oak still stood an object of interest in Windsor Park. It had ceased to put forth leaves for half a century, and its sapless trunk was hollowed by decay to a height of 10 ft. or 12 ft. from the ground. At last, in the autumn of that year, not by wind or storm, but during a calm, still evening, the crumbling support gave way, and the upper branches fell with a crash to the ground.

Her Majesty gave directions that all the solid timber left should be preserved, and of it various articles have since been made, as relics of the venerable tree, famous even in the time of Queen Elizabeth for its age and size. Among the most interesting of the objects formed of the wood are two busts of Shakespeare, recently carved by Mr. Perry, of 5, North Audley-street; one, which is represented in our Engraving, for the Queen and the other for the



BUST OF SHAKESPEARE, CARVED OUT OF A PORTION OF HERNE'S OAK, IN THE POSSESSION OF HER MAJESTY.

Prince of Wales. The artist has adopted the costume of the Stratford bust. He has, however, made use not only of that but of the portraits in his representation of the poet's features and general appearance. He is supposed to have been about thirty years of



SKELETON OF A MAMMOTH ETC., IN THE DRESDEN MINERALOGICAL MUSEUM.

age when the portraits were taken, and about fifty-two as delineated in the Stratford monument. Mr. Perry has endeavoured to represent what Shakespeare might have been when from forty to forty-five years of age. He has copied the high forehead and arched eyebrows of the stone monument, and at the same time avoided the high shoulders, inanimate expression, and ridiculous smirk which disfigure it. These he has exchanged for the more graceful bearing, the thinner face, marked features, and more thoughtful expression of the portraits, and the result is a figure of the poet carved in oak which may fairly vie with works of sculpture in brass or stone.

THE MAMMOTH ELK.

IN the course of "civilisation"—which in our days has come to mean a collection of contrivances for making people comfortable without the necessity of bodily exertion—we shall probably have to write of the deer as an animal "once to be found in the highlands of Scotland, and, in a half-tamed state, in some of the extensive park-lands of the English nobility." When this state of things has come to pass, however, we shall still preserve specimens of the animal and perfect examples of its skeleton in our museums of natural history, where they will share attention with the remains of those mammoth elks which are already objects of interest.

The elk, which is still to be found in the dense shadows of Swedish and Danish forests, where the herds browse in the twilight of the dark pines, is the largest of the deer family, being as tall at the shoulders as a horse; and, indeed, his venison is but of a horsey-gamey flavour. The horns weigh sometimes as much as 50 lb., and therefore require the short strong neck which is characteristic of this animal as compared with others of its species. There can be no doubt whatever that the elk is a noble and majestic looking animal in his native wilds, and elk-hunting is one of the most pleasant sports imaginable, especially when it is conducted on such sound principles of comfort and unlimited refreshment as seem to have accompanied the excursions of the Prince of Wales when he followed the chase during his visit to Denmark.

But the numbers of the elk have been for some time diminishing in Sweden and Norway; and even the moose (which is the American elk) is less plentiful than it was formerly. It is in Northern Europe, however, that the finest specimens have been found. At the Swedish Consulate, some years ago, there was a two-year-old elk which measured upwards of six feet in height at the shoulder. It is said, however, that the animal does not attain its full growth until the fourteenth year, as up to that time his horns, which are of a flat form, acquire annually an additional branch. The female has no horns; but both horns and hoofs are, with the male, terrible weapons of defence, with which he is able to protect himself even against a wolf. In the summer season the elk resorts to morasses or low-lying land, or even to situations where he can readily take to the water, for he is an admirable swimmer; but in the winter he remains for the most part in the recesses of the forest, goes alone or in small parties instead of in herds, and browses on the small branches of the wood, amongst which he carries his great horns horizontally, to prevent their becoming entangled. Here he may be seen shambling gently in the dim light of the thicket, or, being disturbed, may be heard galloping furiously, with a speed and clatter equal to that of a company of dragoons.

The elks of to-day, however, are, notwithstanding their noble proportions, less than those animals whose fossil remains have been discovered in various parts of Europe, and which are not properly elks, but gigantic stags. One of the earliest complete specimens is that in the Edinburgh Collection. It was found in the Isle of Man, in a marl full of fresh-water shells, at the depth of 18 ft. The dimensions are—6 ft. high, 9 ft. long, and in height, to the top of the horn, 9 ft. 7½ in. The remains of these now extinct animals have been discovered in peat and marl in various parts of England and Ireland, in France, on the Rhine, in Silesia, and in Lombardy. The most remarkable examples, however, have been found in Ireland; and for this reason the Ceruus giganteus is commonly known as the Irish Elk, of which specimens may be seen in the British Museum, in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, in the Irish Museum, and in that of the Royal Society in Dublin. One of the finest and most recent examples (from which our Engraving is taken) was discovered near Limerick, and has been placed in the Mineralogical Museum at Dresden.

OPERA AND CONCERTS.

THE Royal Italian Opera opened on Tuesday evening with "Faust." Mario was in excellent voice, and sang, as he is in the habit of singing some half-dozen times every season, to perfection. Mdlle. Berini appeared for the first time as Margherita; and Mdlle. Honoré, also for the first time, as Siebel, the betrothed. Both the débutantes were successful, but neither achieved a very great success. Mdlle. Berini comes, we believe, from Bologna—that is to say, she has been recently performing there; but her singing, her acting, and even her pronunciation of the Italian language, are essentially French. She has considerable talent, and does everything she undertakes satisfactorily, but without even producing any great impression on the audience. The new contralto is much on a par with the new soprano. Mdlle. Honoré is clever, graceful, and acts and sings with good taste; but she is far from being a vocalist of the first order. The most that can be said of her is that she is pleasing, but that in itself is a great deal. The part of Mephistophiles is now played by Signor Attri—another artist who, without any pretension to genius, possesses great ability and never commits a fault. Mario does make a mistake now and then, when he calculates upon a voice which is not always ready to answer the demands made upon it; but he is the one really great singer who appears in "Faust" as "Faust" is now represented at the Royal Italian Opera.

"A Monday Popular Concert" (there is no other name for that particular kind of entertainment) is to be given this (Saturday) afternoon—of course at St. James's Hall. The soloists will be Mdlle. Arabella Goddard and Herr Joachim. The instrumental selection will be from the works of Beethoven, and will include the now really popular Kreutzer sonata.

We read somewhere the other day, a story (which we do not believe) to the effect that Mr. Tennyson was preparing a libretto for one of our English composers. Fancy such a razor being used to cut such a block as an opera-book into correct musical shape!

Altogether, there have been very few happy unions between music and poetry. When music has been "married to immortal verses," the immortal verse has generally made a very bad match; and there have also been numerous cases of *misalliance* between fine music and worthless words.

As regards the opera, however, the music has had the best of it, to such an extent that it has completely crushed the words. Indeed, the whole history of the opera is the history of the constant growth of the musical portion of the lyric drama at the expense of the words. The importance of the composer as compared with the poet has gone on increasing until, now, the latter has become quite subordinate to the former. He is a poet no longer, and is too often a mere maker-up of doggerel.

If Mr. Tennyson wishes to be of service to our national music, he will not waste his poetic genius upon a libretto, but will be content to give his chosen composer (whoever the fortunate one may be) ballads or songs which may be set to music without being overlaid in the setting, as in our modern operatic system must always happen. English composers, moreover, have a particular talent for ballad-writing. Hence, no doubt, the superabundance of ballads noticeable in so many of the works of our native composers. The peculiar relations existing between composers and publishers in England are often referred to in order to explain this artistic fault; and when one or more ballads occur in an opera neither in character with the rest of the work nor well placed in a dramatic point of view, it is often remarked by operatic critics that they have been "written for the music-publisher"—meaning that they have been written out of consideration for the music-publisher's pocket, with

a view to their sale as detached pieces. May not this, however, be a notion spread by the composers, many of whom have a talent for ballad-writing which is appreciated by the public? whereas, if they have a talent for any other kind of composition, it is perhaps not appreciated, or, at all events, not to the same extent. If the publisher likes his profits, the composer also likes his encores; and this sort of homage is scarcely ever paid to him except after a ballad. There are also the singers to think of, and it is often with the view of pleasing an estimable soprano, or satisfying an exacting tenor, or pacifying a querulous baritone, or of conciliating an offended contralto—all piqued at the comparative insignificance of their respective parts—that ballads are dragged by the neck and shoulders into our English operas. The tenor in "Don Giovanni" has one solo—a good one, but only one; Don Giovanni himself has only one, which is sung in about a fourth part of the time that the baritone of an English opera takes to draw out each of the two verses of his inevitable ballad. But an English tenor would rather not sing than accept a part with only a single air in it; and he will not thank the composer much for a part that contains only two—unless, indeed, he has something overpoweringly good assigned to him in the concerted pieces and finales. The great object of some tenors is to astonish the audience by their persistence in dwelling upon a flat, supposing that to be the highest eminence that they can conveniently attain. Once perched in safety on an A flat, a tenor will remain balancing himself upon it for some seconds, like a dancer poised on the tip of her toe. A baritone, too, who has a tolerable F at the top of his voice naturally wishes the public to notice it, and accordingly holds on to it in their presence until they applaud him for his tenacity, if for nothing else. These little weaknesses (otherwise these strong points) of the principal singers must be studied by the composer, or they will not study his operas. Often, too, the composer is not at all unwilling to attend to them. Operatic composers are not the only artistic producers who, for the sake of making a hit here and there, will commit the grave error of sacrificing the whole of a work to parts of it; and when a ballad, or, as sometimes happens, a series of ballads, are introduced into an opera *à propos* of nothing particular—and when these ballads are "vociferously applauded" and "enthusiastically encored," as will also happen, then the music-publisher is not by any means the only person to blame. A certain amount of censure may also be bestowed on the singers, on the public, but, above all, on the composer himself.

FINE ARTS.

THE EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.

If anyone be curious to find how many bad pictures can be collected in one exhibition, let him by all means visit the Suffolk-street Gallery. We venture to believe that he will acknowledge that it has seldom been his fortune to meet with anything so curiously inferior in his life.

The position the society has long held has been low down in the scale, far beneath even the British Institution. But this year it has descended even below its average. There are, it is true—and it is no slight comfort for the critic whose duty compels him to go over the acres of paint and poverty—some few gems to be discovered of such excellence as almost to repay him for the mental and physical torture of wading through about a thousand inferior pictures. But the gems are very rare—so rare as almost to suggest a suspicion that artists who can paint, finding their works hung year after year in the most unfavourable positions, while the extraordinary canvases of Messrs. Hurlstone and Salter loom large "on the line," have at last lost patience, and decline to send pictures to an exhibition which never could bring them honour, and which, thanks to bad hanging, does not even afford profit.

Decidedly the most striking picture on the walls is Mr. Barnes's "Pangs of Poverty" (176)—a painting of which Edouard Frère need not have been ashamed. A tiny child, poorly clad, thrusting her poor little hands into a mangy old muff to keep them out of temptation, eyes a stall covered with toys with a hopeless longing that is very touching. A truly exquisite work in the simple, homely way in which it appeals to the feelings, it is also a masterly bit of painting. The artist who painted this and "Vive la Gloire," in the British Institution, is not one of whom the world is likely to lose sight. His "On the Coast" (265) is a clever study, very pleasant in colour; and his "Neapolitan" (546) a thoroughly sound picture, with honest, firm handling, and good composition. Mr. C. Nicholls's "Sketching from Nature" (334), though a trifle cold, is a clever picture: the shy attitude of the little model is natural and unaffected. "Sweet Primroses" (251) and a "Troubadour" (249), by the same artist, are small, but excellent in tone and treatment; and "A Fairy Tale" (663) is full of charm, a picture to which, after finishing our inspection of the gallery, we return for a last peep, before leaving. Mr. Rossiter exhibits but one picture this year—"Gentle Help" (633)—but that one is so marked by the usual excellence in colour, arrangement, and drawing that we cannot but regret that he wanted either the time or the inclination to do more to raise the tone of the gallery.

Who will not sympathise with the tiny student so puzzled and perplexed at the "Hard Word" (278) in Mr. D. T. White's picture? The "Love Token" (588), by the same artist, is another happily selected subject, painted with considerable skill, and pleasing in colour. These two pictures strengthen still more the high opinion formed of the powers of this rising young painter when his "Music and Dancing" appeared in the British Institution. Mr. Fitzgerald only exhibits two pictures this year, "Going to the Masked Ball" (52), and "Bianca" (475). They are both excellent, but we miss the rich fancy, the fruitful imagination, which we are accustomed to look for in Mr. Fitzgerald's works—one of the very best of which, "The Enchanted Stream," was exhibited last year on these very walls; perhaps we ought rather to say floor, for it was very badly placed, a fact which may have made this artist withhold his better works from the society's gallery.

Mr. F. Weekes paints with his accustomed humour "Touchstone and Audrey" (177), and "Sir John Falstaff and Mrs. Quickly" (706). Mr. Soden seems treading in his footsteps and in those of Mr. Marks, but he possesses a racy originality of his own. "The King took wake to-night and take his rouse" (191)—the theatrical monarch taking a quiet glass with the ghost behind the scenes—is laughably conceived and forcibly rendered; and there is considerable character in some of the figures in "Trumped His Own Trick" (17). Somewhat in the same line is Mr. Tourrier's "Street in London in the Seventeenth Century" (279), in which, however, the faces are a little unequal, though the accessories are carefully done.

"Nigel's Expected Visitor" (226) by Mr. A. Hont, is a meritorious work enough—the attitude and conception of Dalgarno being suggestively characteristic. The hostess is a capital realisation of plump, fond, indiscreet, buxom Mistress Christie. "Albert Durer Setting Out on his Wanderschaft" (392), by Mr. Goldie, may claim a high place among the good pictures. Mr. Goldie is always good in colour. In this picture he has most felicitously caught the spirit of his subject, and the result is most satisfactory.

"The Lullaby" (46), by Mr. Holmes—a fat youngster rocking the dog, who has, with a keen eye to warmth and comfort, coiled himself up in his young master's cradle—is well conceived and very fairly executed. The background is a little careless or feeble; we hope the former, for the picture bears promise of good. "The Blackbird's Song" (168), by the same artist, is also very pleasing. "A Sip from Daddy's Cup" (187), by Mr. Haynes King, belongs to the same class of subjects and has some capital points about it; and his "Cottage Door" (563) must also be mentioned with praise.

"Disengaged" (81), by Mr. Waite, tells its story very well, and is carefully painted, the figure of the girl who has no partner being especially pleasing. A chubby child "From the Bavarian Highlands" (82), by Mr. Ludovici, is a most taking little study; and his "Tiger hunting" (594)—a party of boys on a garden-wall shooting peas at a stray cat, and pretending, no doubt, to be "the Old Shikarry" or "Mansfield and Charles"—is painted with considerable dash. The idea is exceedingly good. Mr. Hemsley's "Grace

Before Meat" (58) is a clever group, the various expressions being rendered with great truth. But his "Castles in the Air" (665), a young girl in a reverie—say, about the Refuge of the Good Shepherd or the Oratory—is a still more happy effort.

Mr. J. C. Lewis, an artist whose works are always excellent, exhibits but one picture. It is a delicious painting, brimming with the sentiment of the lines quoted against its number (595) in the catalogue,

Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon.
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west,
Under the silver moon!

A somewhat similar subject, "Dormiendo" (435), a Spanish mother rocking her babe to sleep, by Mr. Long, must not be allowed to pass without a word of praise; nor should we omit honourable mention of Mr. Garland's "Unconscious of the Mischief" (377). Mr. Baxter's "Winter" (511), or Mr. F. Buckstone's "Tot" (300). The latter artist also exhibits a clever "View near Whitty" (302).

There are many lady exhibitors; but, with few exceptions, their works are not of a nature to raise the standard of excellence. Miss Osborn, however, holds her own well. "Of course she said 'Yes'" (45) is one of the best pictures of hers that we have seen. The frame of sketches illustrating Mrs. Browning's lines is not quite so good. By-the-way, we would point out that the lines are absurdly misquoted. They should run:—

Is ever a lament begun
By any mourner under sun,
Which, ere it endeth, suits but one?

Miss Kate Swift's "Lesson to Learn" (399) has so many excellent points that it is to be regretted she has thrown into the colouring a yellow metallic tone, which injures the general effect. Miss Westphal's "Old Woman of Schleswig" (604) puts to shame the works of many of her male rivals. The face is most carefully and successfully portrayed.

To select any pictures for special condemnation where the claimants for that distinction are so numerous is almost invidious. However, *pour encourager les autres*, we may state that we consider No. 91 to be such a dab of such a subject as to be almost blasphemous, though quite an unintentional caricature. No. 131, instead of being described as "Queen Elizabeth," might be called "The Good Queen Bess," and might then find its level over an inn door. As for "The Two Cardinal Sins of Italy—Begging and Gambling," we should like to paint a companion canvas of the two cardinal sins of its painter—dirtiness of colour and incorrectness of drawing.

In landscape—the strong point of English art—the gallery is hardly less deficient than in figure. The glorious nature and splendid colouring of Mr. George Cole, the truth and beauty of Mr. Boddington, and the skillful, but too often repeated, moonlight effects of Mr. Gilbert are too well known to ask for more than passing mention. Mr. Cole, as usual, revels in the golden sunset as it pours across a yellow harvest-field; Mr. Boddington finds out a green islet on the silver bosom of Thame; and Mr. Gilbert wanders beside a moonlit mere beyond which rise the eternal hills capped with early snows. Two deliciously-faithful pictures are Mr. Mawley's: "A Village—Evening" (18), in which the tints of dying day are noted with loving and appreciative skill; and a lovely view (228) of

The quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam—

which, by-the-by, are not "Thompson," but "Tennyson."

Mr. Marc Anthony's "Old Country Church" (271) is a fine, conscientious work. It is, we believe, the first painting of his that we have met with that is hung so that we can see it properly, and we are glad to be able to confirm the verdict we have passed on a very imperfect acquaintance with his paintings at the Royal Academy. Mr. F. Walton's "Through the Twilight" (111) is simply lovely. It is a painted poem, and one we would fain spend hours in studying. Two namesakes, Mr. J. and Mr. J. T. Walton, are also exhibitors, the best specimens of their style being Nos. 424 and 425. Mr. Pitt, whose views on the Devonshire and Cornish streams are well known and greatly admired, contributes three pictures—Nos. 259, 267, and 478. It is no easy matter to say which it is best, but we incline to the view of St. Germans.

Mr. Henry's "Sunlit Ocean" (497), Mr. Coppard's "Woodland Scene" (197), Miss Williams's "Morning on the Medway" (133), Mr. Crockford's "View on Hampstead Heath" (215), Mr. E. Boddington's "On the Wey" (15), Mr. C. Earle's "Harvesting" (496), Mr. Barnett's "Old Bridge at Dietz" (419), Mr. Shirley's "Shower" (262*), Mr. R. H. Nibbs's "Nook in the South Downs" (155), and Mr. Meadows's lovely "English River Scene" (701) are all works that rank high in the list of good pictures.

Mr. Rose has two nice paintings on the walls—"A Pilgrim Road on the Berling Hills" (605) and "Morning, Noon, and Night" (194). Mr. Syer's two best works are "Llyn Heli" (139) and "The Mountain Rill" (541). Mr. Pyne's pictures are unequal: "The Church of San Giorgio Maggiore" (495) pleases us most—the "Roman Aqueducts" (205) least. "An English Pastoral" (158) and "Isleworth" (480), by Mr. Tennant, are deserving of favourable notice; and the same may be said of Mr. Pettit's "Spring" (169) and "Autumn" (227), and of Mr. Webb's "Richmond" (605*) and "Sandown Bay" (676). Mr. A. Williams is represented by several very clever landscapes, of which the three most pleasing will be found under numbers 14, 44, and 148. Mr. Whittle shows to the greatest advantage in Nos. 244 and 384. Mr. Percy is largely represented, and still too purple in tone. Mr. C. Smith exhibits some agreeable views, and Mr. Woolmer has some of his peculiar paintings on the walls, rather remarkable for eccentricity than notable for beauty. Among the marine painters we find Mr. Hayes—*fugate princeps*—Mr. Wilson, Mr. Nibbs, and Mr. Alfred Clint. In animal painting we may mention with commendation Messrs. Physick, Corbould, Horlor, Luke, Riviere, and Simms.

The water-colour room is the most successful portion of the exhibition. Here we find Mr. G. Wolfe, who paints sea and sunset with so felicitous a brush; Mr. Stannus, who infuses so much poetry into his scenes; and Mr. B. E. and Mr. H. C. Warren, whose handling of foliage is so happy.

Mr. George Cole and Mr. Mawley add to the laurels they win in oils by some exquisite water colours. Miss A. and Miss F. Claxton exhibit clever drawings—the former a capital idea, "The Ghost's Walk" (844), capably rendered. We may also speak in high terms of the pictures shown by Mr. Keys, Mr. Howard, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Glennie, and Mr. Varley, who, with Mr. Ditchfield, Miss S. Rayner, and Mr. Deakin, take first rank among the water-colour landscape-painters.

"Reading the Spectator" (778), by Mr. Chapman; "Madonna" (791), by Mr. Backhouse; "Puritan Pleasures" (815), by Miss J. A. Edwards; "Bonnie Blue Een" (907), by Mr. J. Bouvier; "Old Letters" (938), by Mr. Dudley; and the "Prisoner" (984), by Mr. T. Weekes, may be named as representing the best of the figure subjects.

In still life we have several very clever studies by Mr. Whiteford. The sculpture is below the mark, and therefore beneath criticism.

INAUGURATION OF THE RAMSAY AND WILSON STATUES AT EDINBURGH.—The formal inauguration of the statues to Allan Ramsay and Professor Wilson, at Edinburgh, took place on Saturday afternoon, amidst much rejoicing. The Lord Provost, magistrates, and town council of Edinburgh attended the inauguration ceremony in their official robes, and there were also present a number of representatives from public bodies in other towns, and several eminent Scottish noblemen and gentlemen. The Lord President of the Court of Session, in the name of the committee of gentlemen who had acted for the subscribers to the Wilson memorial, formally handed over the statue to the city. At a given signal the statue was then uncovered, and the band of the 15th Highlanders performed the National Anthem. The Lord Provost then briefly acknowledged the gift, after which the procession moved to the other side of the institution, where Sir John McNeill, one of the trustees appointed by the late Lord Murray, presented the Ramsay statue to the Corporation, the same ceremony being observed as in the former instance, and the National Anthem being performed by the band of the 74th Highlanders.

